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New York

President:	Mr. Li Baodong	(China)
Members:	Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Haroon
	Portugal	Mr. Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	Togo	Mr. Kandangha-Bariki
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/462)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/462)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Latvia, New Zealand and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Stephen Evans, Assistant Secretary-General for Operations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/462, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

Mr. Ladsous (*spoke in French*): Important developments have taken place in and affecting Afghanistan since the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Jan Kubiš, briefed the Security Council in March (see S/PV.6735).

Significant progress was made during two international conferences in Kabul and in Chicago — with a third to take place next month in Tokyo — that begin to define and shape the future of Afghanistan as it makes its way towards self-reliance. The Kabul ministerial conference that took place on 14 June was an opportunity for Afghanistan to demonstrate leadership on a process that is critical to its future stability — building regional cooperation and trust. Afghan-led, regionally owned and internationally supported, the Istanbul process has made impressive strides since its launch in November 2011, a little over seven months ago.

In Kabul, Heart of Asia nations endorsed seven confidence-building measures, developed through a consultative regional process, which address common threats and obstacles to regional stability, economic development and humanitarian response. More such measures are expected as the process continues. I am pleased that they have sought out the participation of relevant United Nations agencies, which of course will provide technical support to each initiative.

This process is an important new addition — particularly important because of its Afghan leadership — to the many bilateral, trilateral and multilateral forums already in place, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan, and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. It should be seen as contributing to our shared goal of building a cooperative, stable and prosperous region.

In terms of regional initiatives of the United Nations system, I appreciate the role played by United Nations agencies in addressing entrenched challenges that clearly go beyond the ability of any one country in the region to address. First, I would like to note the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Let us recall that more than 3 million Afghan refugees are registered in Pakistan and Iran. That obviously has a huge impact on not just Afghanistan but also those two host countries. I also welcome, and urge the Council to support, the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, which was launched in Geneva in May by Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other members of the United Nations family, with a view to addressing the return and reintegration of Afghan refugees in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

The production and trafficking of narcotics from Afghanistan undermines the stability of the region and affects the whole world. I am pleased that Executive Director Yuri Fedotov, of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, is here today to brief us on the latest developments related to counter-narcotics and cross-border crime.

(*spoke in English*)

The meeting on Afghanistan that took place on 21 May as part of the NATO Summit in Chicago went a long way towards defining the shape of, and the long-term support to, the Afghan National Security Forces. We saw important guarantees, both financial and technical, as well as a reconfirmation of NATO commitments to previously agreed timelines for transition. Providing that level of clarity and commitment on continued support to the security sector helps to dampen growing anxiety, both within Afghanistan as well as among its international partners, as to the post-2014 situation. It also reinforces the message from the international community that transition will not translate into an abandonment of Afghanistan.

As the Afghan National Security Forces gradually assume responsibility for the security of the country, we shall continue to advocate for the strengthening of their oversight and accountability mechanisms, particularly within police and local police structures. I wish to emphasize again that all parties — in particular Afghan security forces, given their increased responsibilities — must continue to prioritize the protection of civilians.

As the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/462) on Afghanistan notes, the past three months saw a dramatic decline in the number of security incidents over 2011. However, unfortunately, it was also marked by large-scale incidents and an increase in the use of tactics targeting civilians, particularly the indiscriminate use of improvised explosive devices and the targeted killing of civilians by anti-Government elements. Let us not forget that it is those forces that are responsible for up to 80 per cent of civilian casualties.

As Special Representative Kubiš highlighted in March, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has documented that 2011 marked the fifth consecutive year of increasing civilian casualties, albeit with fewer incidents. That is simply not acceptable. We must therefore continue to urge all parties to the conflict to increase their efforts to protect civilians and call for individuals responsible to be held accountable.

On that note, I wish to make special mention of the 12 June decision by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), following the tragic civilian deaths resulting from an air strike in Logar province six days earlier, to increase restrictions on the use of aerial munitions against civilian dwellings. Although, as I have said, the number of incidents attributed to pro-Government forces continues to decline, and is a small portion of the total — and those forces, notably ISAF, continue to vigorously adopt measures to reduce civilian casualties — UNAMA has repeatedly expressed concern that aerial operations have resulted in more civilian deaths and injuries than any other tactic used by pro-Government forces. Therefore, let me again say that that decision by ISAF is a very welcome development.

Security alone, however, will not bring lasting stability and peace to Afghanistan. Just as we have seen progress in defining long-term support to the security side, it is equally important to see the same level of commitment to the social-economic development sector. We therefore very much look forward to the upcoming Tokyo conference as an important step in that direction. The Secretary-General will head the United Nations delegation, which will include the UNAMA Special Representative and myself.

We have noted concerns from all sides that the fine words and commitments expressed during the many conferences on Afghanistan over the past decade be lived up to. To that end, I welcome the ongoing development of a framework and a mechanism that will track progress on such commitments and hold both the Afghan Government and donors accountable for their implementation. The mutual accountability mechanism, which should report through the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, is expected to be agreed upon in Tokyo and will provide a solid foundation upon which to build long-term development support.

However, we must ensure that expectations surrounding what Afghanistan can do over a short time frame — given capacity and resource limitations and given the fragility of its nascent institutions — are realistic and do not prove self-defeating. We must keep in mind our overall objective, namely, to see a stable, self-reliant Afghanistan with effective institutions delivering essential services, justice and opportunities

to its people. We will reach that goal only if we continue to invest in Afghanistan's maturing institutions and in the priorities Afghans themselves set.

I welcome Afghan leadership on the processes that most affect the country and its people, starting with the prioritization of development objectives and the Heart of Asia process, which I mentioned earlier, but also including reconciliation initiatives and the preparation of upcoming elections.

The appointment of Salahuddin Rabbani to lead the High Peace Council signals the continued engagement, commitment and continuity on the part of the Afghan Government. The United Nations continues to stand ready to support the Council's efforts and looks forward to seeing an Afghan-led peace and reconciliation process gain momentum.

The upcoming 2014 elections will be a watershed moment, with significant impact on the consolidation of the progress made to date and on long-term stability. They should be held in full accord with the Constitution, to ensure a smooth political transition and to demonstrate Afghanistan's growing self-reliance and sovereignty. We welcome President Karzai's statement in Chicago in May that elections must be marked by integrity and must be free from internal or external interventions. By the way, we are already seeing a rise in political activity and debate ahead of the 2014 polls.

We also welcome the constructive consultation process on the electoral law, which the Independent Election Commission recently completed, as well as the decision to begin work on the voter registry, both of which are encouraging signs of an essential ingredient for a sound process — that is to say, inclusiveness.

In addition to the ongoing United Nations Development Programme's second phase of its Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow project, which is providing electoral technical support, Special Representative Kubiš has been consulting with the Government and relevant institutions to determine how best the United Nations can assist the electoral process. There are still two years to go before elections, and it is critical that such Government decisions proceed apace.

As our report clearly shows, humanitarian issues continue to be a cause for concern. The spring floods this year have been particularly severe, following the very harsh 2011-2012 winter, and, of course, continuing conflict exacerbates already serious displacement issues. On her recent visit, the Emergency Relief Coordinator highlighted the extensive humanitarian needs, the uncertainties of the future and — I must say — the lagging support for this year's consolidated appeal. While we must aim over the longer term to link humanitarian assistance with development initiatives, we cannot neglect the urgent immediate needs right now on the ground.

Finally, allow me to turn to developments that more directly affect the future of the UNAMA Mission itself. Circumstances around the world — financial crises in major economies and competing demands for international attention — have combined to impact United Nations peace operations and have led to shrinking budgets. That will also affect UNAMA. Expectations that the Mission will be able to do more as the transition proceeds would not be realistic in the face of this greater fiscal austerity.

UNAMA and other special political missions must meet targets set by the General Assembly over two-year cycles. Of course, it is ultimately for United Nations budgetary bodies to determine budgets and resource requirements, but the budget we will put forward for UNAMA for 2013 will reflect the overall need for cuts that have been requested by Member States.

As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, a strategic decision has been made to reshape the footprint of UNAMA in the provinces, in line with recommendations from the comprehensive review undertaken last year at the request of the Security Council, with changes related to transition and with the latest Security Council mandate. That decision will certainly help to reduce costs.

If the Mission is to address the significant reduction of its budget, UNAMA will also need to review all aspects of its substantive and support structures and to prioritize its programming activities. Such an exercise would necessarily have an impact on the delivery of the mandate, the extent of which is yet to be determined and will soon be reported to the United Nations budgetary bodies and to the Council.

(*spoke in French*)

Informal discussions on the post-2014 international framework, including the role of the United Nations in Afghanistan, must take into consideration those budgetary and programmatic constraints, along with

needs of the transition and the situation on the ground. Such discussions must also be defined by an appropriate consultative process, first and foremost with the Afghan Government, so that the Council can make an informed decision.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Fedotov.

Mr. Fedotov: Thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to address the Security Council. I am pleased to have the opportunity to brief the Council on the latest activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) designed to interrupt the flow of drugs and crime in the region.

The recent report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/462) specifically recognizes the threat of drugs and crime. Indeed, Afghanistan produces around 90 per cent of the world's opiates, and the southern part of the country is the world's largest opium-producing region.

Total global opium production amounted to around 7,000 tons in 2011. In Afghanistan, opium production increased from 3,600 tons in 2010 to 5,800 tons in 2011. The country's poppy-free provinces may also be falling for the second year running, down from 18 to 15. UNODC estimates that trafficking in opiates is a $68-billion business for the criminals. These drugs are responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of people throughout the world every year, but Afghanistan also suffers from the highest rates of opiate prevalence in the world, as well as HIV/AIDS. Drug trafficking also undermines stability in the region, fuels organized crime and corruption, increases drug consumption and spreads HIV/AIDS.

As we move towards 2014, we cannot allow a vacuum to form that would further encourage the production of opium. That view was affirmed by my own recent visit to Afghanistan and Tajikistan. When I met with President Karzai, I stressed the need for the Afghan Government, at every level, to express its commitment to addressing the drug problem as a national priority. The President agreed to that. My visit to opium poppy fields in Badakhshan province showed that eradication efforts must be more vigorously supported by alternative development programmes.

Afghan counter-narcotics authorities are demonstrating their own commitment to combating poppy cultivation, but much more needs to be done. As of 19 June, a total of 11,000 hectares of poppy fields had been eradicated. That figure represents a 173 per cent increase compared to 2011. However it represents less than 10 per cent of total poppy cultivation area. Food zones, such as in Helmand province, are contributing to the decline in poppy cultivation in some areas, but more funds are needed to support such projects. Landowners are now being targeted by a new law that criminalizes the use of their land for poppy cultivation. We now look forward to meaningful implementation of that law. There are also signs that a plant disease may blight this year's crop, as it did in 2010. But plant disease offers no solution to the problem of Afghan's opiates, and stockpiles may well exist. Therefore, we cannot afford to take our foot off the accelerator.

At the political level, we are building momentum through the Paris Pact initiative, while developing integrated regional programmes. UNODC's $117-million country programme for Afghanistan was launched in May. The programme is closely linked to the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries. Together, those programmes form part of UNODC's overall strategy to provide a coherent field response to drug trafficking, as well as closer cooperation among regional and international actors. Strengthened border controls are also an essential element of the strategy. Both programmes are connected to such bodies as the Triangular Initiative, the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre and Operation TARCET, which targets the precursor chemicals necessary to produce opium and heroin.

There are also new initiatives that are linked to the Regional Programme. The Criminal Assets Southern Hub initiative will target criminal profits by offering advice to national authorities. The Southern Trafficking Operational Plan will couple alternative livelihoods, while also maximizing law enforcement and interdiction efforts. The Maritime Regional Security Initiative will address the movement of trafficking into the sea, in particular between Iran and Pakistan. In May, we started the Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe, which complements those activities by concentrating on Afghan heroin flowing through Central and West Asia and then on through the Balkans.

UNODC is also helping to create international and inter-agency partnerships. One example is the United Nations task force on transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, established by the Secretary-General in 2011. In Dushanbe on 1 June, I co-chaired the first regional meeting of the task force in Central Asia.

Today's thematic debate is timely. We stand midway between another key set of milestones in the international community's journey to support and assist Afghanistan. There are many challenges in Afghanistan, but I would encourage Member States to do everything possible to communicate the message that illicit drugs and crime are capable of undermining attempts to promote economic and social development in the country. Our work is in the interests of Afghanistan and the victims of illicit drugs, but it is also in the common interests of the international community.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Fedotov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. We commend your able leadership of the Council this month. We also thank the Secretary-General for his report on Afghanistan (S/2012/462) and welcome the presence and insights of Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and Executive Director Fedotov.

A month ago, at the NATO Summit in Chicago, Afghanistan's friends and partners came together to express their unanimous support for the end of war and the beginning of a new phase in our enduring partnership, which was first envisioned in Lisbon in 2010. Our partnership will continue into the transformation decade, during which time Afghanistan will take full charge of its security, governance and development.

Just weeks ago, we inked the Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement with the United States of America as the guiding framework of our bilateral cooperation for the long haul, solidifying mutual commitments, including on strengthened Afghan sovereignty, stability and prosperity in the years to come. Although the specifics of the partnership will continue to be crystallized, the agreement has been endorsed by both houses of the Afghan parliament, clearly manifesting the overwhelming support from all corners of the country.

As part of the new phase of international engagement in support of Afghanistan, we have also established strategic partnerships with Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Germany and, most recently, Australia. Furthermore, discussions are under way to conclude similar agreements with Turkey, Norway and the European Union. In our own region, we signed a strategic partnership with India, a country with which we have shared historic and traditional ties. Earlier this month, Afghanistan took an important step forward towards establishing a strategic and cooperative partnership with our other great neighbour, China.

The launch of the Istanbul process, in November 2011, was a milestone in the realization of a new regional order by which Afghanistan and other Heart-of-Asia countries joined hands for a common goal and future, namely, peace, stability and prosperity. The Heart of Asia ministerial conference held in Kabul less than two weeks ago advanced the objectives of the Istanbul process. As part of the conference outcome, we reaffirmed our solid commitment to implement a wide range of confidence-building measures. I take this opportunity to convey our gratitude to all friends and partners for their participation and support.

Afghanistan also obtained observer status to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization at its recent conference in Beijing. That was an important move. With all of those steps, Afghanistan is restoring its historic role as a land bridge and its potential to become a catalyst for peace and stability in the entire region.

We look forward to next month's Tokyo ministerial conference, where we aim to effectively address the areas of Afghanistan's economic sustainability and development, the fiscal gap, as well as to finalize a mutual accountability agreement between Afghanistan and the international community. In Tokyo, Afghanistan will present a comprehensive action plan on self-reliance and our national priority programmes. The conference will not be another pledging event, but an important venue for a solid commitment of the international community to the transition and transformation decade. Our thanks go to the friendly Government of Japan for its generosity in hosting the event.

The transition to Afghan ownership and leadership is our number one strategic priority. In that regard, I am pleased to note that we are making steady progress.

The third tranche of the security transition has officially commenced and includes some of the most conflict-prone provinces with the highest levels of insecurity. Needless to say, we are on track to complete the third phase before the end of the year, by which 75 per cent of the country's population will come under the responsibility of Afghan security forces.

As we strive to complete the security transition by 2013, the need for sustained support for the training and equipping of our national security forces is inevitable. The undertakings towards such support of NATO and other allies at the Chicago Summit will be particularly important.

Another core priority on the way forward will be a strong new focus on establishing a cleaner and more competent Government, through strengthening governance, fighting corruption and enforcing the rule of law. The reform agenda is at the centre of our efforts. At the same time, we are diligently addressing all influences that may pose a threat to national interests and to law and order. Such measures will enhance the full trust and confidence of all Afghans for the future.

A far more challenging task will be the implementation of the socio-economic component of the transition, which is vital to our State-building efforts. Central to that goal will be underscoring support for the Afghan national priority programmes, which emphasize — in addition to security and governance — agricultural development, human resources, infrastructure and the private sector, all of which are vital for our economic growth.

Our vision is of an Afghanistan that is a self-reliant State, standing on its own feet. Afghanistan will not remain an aid economy; we are working to significantly reduce aid dependency by the end of the transformation decade.

Advancing the peace process towards a successful outcome is a core element of our strategy to bring lasting peace to our people and nation. Pursued on the basis of national consensus, we are convinced that our reconciliation efforts remain the surest path to ending the conflict and ensuring a durable peace. Let there be no doubt, our Afghan-led peace process will not ensue at the expense of the hard-won democratic gains of the past decade, including human rights, the rights of women in particular.

In order to achieve a successful outcome to our reconciliation efforts, I wish to underscore the importance of resolute support from our immediate neighbours and other partners in the region and beyond. In that connection, I take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the support provided by the Council within the framework of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011).

The upcoming 2014 elections will be another important step towards Afghanistan's political maturity and the consolidation of democracy in our country. We are taking a number of measures, including electoral reforms, to ensure a smooth political transition consistent with our Constitution.

As we proceed through transition and into the transformation decade, international engagement will remain crucial. In that regard, we also look forward to advancing our close cooperation with the United Nations towards peace and stability in Afghanistan.

One of the greatest impediments to both development and security in Afghanistan is the illicit drug problem. Despite our challenges, Afghanistan is sparing no effort to rid our society of the menace of illicit drugs. Over the past five years, we have significantly reduced poppy cultivation. However, as the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Fedotov, said, there are a number of varying factors over which we have little or no control, including the impact the increase or decrease of poppy cultivation from one year to another.

This year alone, the eradication figures show an important increase — a three-fold increase — since the previous year. We are tracking down and bringing to justice an increased number of individuals involved in drug trafficking. As we know, drug trafficking is not an Afghan-only issue. A long-term solution is not possible without cooperation and coordination in addressing the dominant factors behind the drug problem, such as preventing the flow of chemical precursors into Afghanistan and providing Afghan farmers with alternative livelihoods.

As we continue our joint journey towards a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, building on the gains of the past, Afghanistan's enemies are still very much intent on derailing our progress and preventing our success. That is evident in the continued brutal acts of violence and terror by the Taliban and those behind

them, the latest of which was the massacre at Spozhmai Hotel, just outside Kabul, last weekend. It is a continued psychological war, a war of perception, a psychodrama.

However, no such shameful acts of terror will deter the will of the Afghan people from their ultimate goal of securing peace and prosperity. Afghans have come too far and endured far too many sacrifices to give up now. With such brutal acts, the Taliban are not threatening the existence of the State, they are just disrupting people's peaceful lives. Let us remain as committed as ever before to complete the journey we began a decade ago.

The Afghan people and Government express their gratitude to the international community for their resolute support for Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council. I would like to request that Council members limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

Mr. Wittig (Germany): At the outset, let me thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous for his briefing, as well as Executive Director Fedotov for highlighting the pivotal role of counter-narcotics efforts for the stability and prosperity of Afghanistan and the entire region.

Germany aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later in this debate on behalf of the European Union.

"Cautious optimism" is the term used in the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/462) to sum up his overall assessment of the current situation in Afghanistan. We fully subscribe to that assessment. Significant progress has been made since the International Conference on Afghanistan held in Bonn last December. Whilethe transition is progressing, with 75 per cent of Afghans already living in areas under the Afghan security lead, the transformation decade, which we agreed upon in Bonn, is taking shape.

In the political field, the recent Heart of Asia ministerial conference held in Kabul was a strong demonstration of Afghan ownership and regional cooperation based on trust, confidence and shared values. Afghanistan is no longer perceived as a mere source of instability but is assuming its role at the heart of a regional process, which is now embarking on a set of concrete confidence-building measures. As expressed by the German Foreign Minister in Kabul, Germany will continue to support that process as an observer, offering our specific expertise in the areas of regional infrastructure and chambers of commerce.

While strengthening ties with the region, Afghanistan has also consolidated its partnerships at the global level though a number of cooperation agreements, including with my own country. The message is clear: Afghanistan is not going to be abandoned in 2014. The international community stands by its commitments.

In the area of security, that message was underscored at the NATO Summit held in Chicago in May, where partners committed to sustain and support Afghan security forces beyond 2014. However, against the backdrop of the military drawdown and its economic implications, sustaining the gains I just described will remain a major challenge.

Commitments in the security field need to be accompanied by a framework of long-term governance and development cooperation that leads to an economically self-sustained Afghanistan. The upcoming Tokyo conference will provide us with an opportunity to take bold steps in that regard. We commend the excellent work by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in supporting the preparatory process in Kabul.

Mutual accountability will be key in Tokyo. While we stand ready to extend our cooperation beyond 2014, we expect clear commitments from the Afghan Government towards better governance, anti-corruption and human rights, as well as safeguarding the democratic achievements beyond 2014. President Karzai's recent speech in the Afghan Parliament contains strong messages in this regard that will need to be followed up within the Afghan Government and Administration.

For the very same reason, we fully subscribe to Mr. Fedotov's analysis that without progress in governance, development and law enforcement, progress in our counter-narcotics efforts also will be limited. We therefore support the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) comprehensive approach, which complements poppy-eradication programmes with targeted investments in law enforcement, criminal justice and livelihoods. We have been continuously funding UNODC's activities in those areas and will continue to do so.

When discussing Afghanistan's future beyond 2014, we cannot but underline the key role that the

United Nations will need to play, based on its unique legitimacy and experience. When it extended UNAMA's mandate in March (see S/PV.6738), the Council expressed its full support for the United Nations good offices in supporting Afghan-led and Afghan-owned reconciliation, building Afghan institutions and supporting the Afghan electoral process, ensuring coherence among donors, and supporting the regional process. In that context, we commend UNAMA's efforts to search for even more efficient ways to operate while ensuring that it maintains sufficient geographical coverage and is able to perform its role as mandated by the Council. The renewed deployment of international staff to UNAMA's Kunduz office and the significant security improvements at the office in Mazar-e-Sharif are welcome developments in that regard.

Our cautious optimism is grounded in the international community's ability to maintain a long-term partnership with Afghanistan. The United Nations will need to play a pivotal role in that regard. Let me assure the Council that Germany remains committed to a strong UNAMA that is able to live up to the high expectations placed upon it.

Mr. Haroon (Pakistan): As always, today's debate carries with it a very interesting sense of timing and history and, of course, of the important, essential aspects of the United Nations and its contribution — as well as that of the rest of the world — in Afghanistan. We are as ever grateful to Ambassador Zahir Tanin for his lucid statement, and many thanks are also due to Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous for the broad coverage of his excellent and wide-ranging briefing on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The eye-opener from Mr. Yuri Fedotov of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) should be recognized before the malaise he describes wins regional support.

We must take cognizance of Mr. Ladsous's statement concerning the challenges of the mandate UNAMA must implement. The accountants wielding knives must be controlled, and the Mission must have resources adequate to the achievement of its goals. We must therefore ensure that any substantial reduction in the UNAMA budget will not affect the core objectives of the United Nations in Afghanistan. I cannot overemphasize this issue, which is the core of the matter at the moment. As Afghan institutions come of age, UNAMA too should continue to adapt to emerging trends and realities.

The Secretary-General's latest report (S/2012/462) and those preceding it provide useful updates on the situation in Afghanistan. As was said earlier, the Secretary-General has struck a note of cautious optimism, specifically concerning the areas of security transition, human development and the growth of Afghan institutions. We agree with him wholeheartedly. Nonetheless, while demonstrating confidence in Afghan transition efforts, the Secretary-General has rightly urged the donor community to refrain from unrealistic demands that ignore constraints on capacity. We believe that long-term engagement on the part of the international community is essential to Afghanistan's stability and economic development. In that context, deliberations at the forthcoming Tokyo conference will be important. We commend the Government of Japan for hosting the conference and look forward to its successful outcome.

The Secretary-General also reports progress in transitioning security responsibilities to the Afghan National Security Forces. Pakistan greatly values that progress, which it sees as a guarantee of sustained stability in Afghanistan, as evidenced — which the Council will be pleased to know — by my President's announcement at the NATO Summit in Chicago of Pakistan's financial contribution to the Afghan National Security Forces.

Besides helping to build the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces, Pakistan has sought closer engagement with Afghanistan and its international partners on all security-related issues. Our leading participation in the seven confidence-building measures on 14 June in Istanbul manifests our commitment. We have done so by maintaining a robust presence of our forces along the international border. Our deployment of troops and paramilitaries in the border region far exceeds the number of international troops in the whole of Afghanistan, and has come at a considerable economic, political and human cost. Our ongoing intelligence and military cooperation with Afghanistan and our international counterparts is progressing smoothly, and recently the improvements in military cooperation have for once been acknowledged by all players.

Pakistan's narrative on Afghan security issues is untainted by polemics. Provocations perpetrated through actions on the ground and through rhetoric have not undermined our restraint. A recent example was the 24 June attack on a Pakistani border post in

which 17 security personnel lost their lives. The matter is being taken up with Afghanistan at the highest level for a bilateral matter.

The latest attack took place where there is apparently a sizeable Afghan National Security Forces and international presence. It is a grave incident that unfortunately is not unprecedented. But our response to such attacks is always to go through official channels. Unlike others, we neither play the blame game nor conduct diplomacy through media. Such restraint, however, should not be taken for granted. Preventing a recurrence of such incidents is absolutely imperative, and safe havens for such people in Afghanistan must be eliminated.

The Secretary-General's report enumerates many challenges to the Afghan peace and reconciliation process. He has characterized progress on reconciliation as slow and uneven. The long-term solution to the challenges in Afghanistan lies in a sustainable reconciliation process. The policy must be transparent, not a covert one that panders to the vagaries of domestic politics. The sustainability of that process can be ensured only if all stakeholders not only believe in it themselves but also share the goal of reconciliation. The process must not be complicated by inexplicable caveats and conditions. The idea of coerced reconciliation flies in the face of the obvious lessons of Afghan history: that Afghan leadership, ownership of and willing participation in all such matters is absolutely essential.

For our part, we are and will remain committed to an Afghan-led and -owned reconciliation process. So far, unfortunately, we see no panacea for delivering peace in Afghanistan, and the current handling of the war there may perhaps be placing any such expectations outside the realm of possibility for the moment.

Despite the best efforts of the world community and the United Nations, Pakistan is still host — and, unfortunately, hostage — to the largest single population of Afghan refugees. In doing so — despite the lack of acknowledgment or funding and an abundance of unjustified, unfair hyperbole — we remain a major contributor, easing the humanitarian burden on Afghanistan at significant economic, social and security costs to the already overburdened people of Pakistan.

We therefore attach great importance to the outcome of the international conference held in Geneva last month. The solution strategy agreed on at the conference should be underpinned by a strong commitment of sustained support from the international community. We must look beyond scapegoating and look forward to those commitments coming to fruition. Meanwhile, Pakistan is hurting. I would suggest stepping up to the plate and bearing what must be borne.

To return to Mr. Fedotov: the policy of treating any production of narcotics with kid gloves must be abandoned. A policy has been in place that aims to avoid antagonizing farmers and that has meant that military and police forces would no longer participate in the eradication of poppy fields. This was stated in a recent article in the Washington Post, and, of course, dilated upon pretty seriously by the adviser Mr. Vali Nasr in his book *The Rise of Islamic Capitalism: Why the New Muslim Middle Class is the Key to Defeating Extremism*.

However, we welcome the Afghanistan country programme for 2012-14 launched by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime last month. The programme's judicious implementation should be finely honed to help address the narcotics problem, as highlighted in the Afghan Opium Survey of December 2011 and UNODC's Opium Risk Assessment of April 2012. We are rightly warned by the UNAMA report that the financial impact of the departure of the international forces might enhance the attraction towards narcotics. The warning calls for the world to acknowledge that and to do something about it now by initiating effective prevention measures.

Even though my friend Ambassador Tanin did not mention Pakistan in his statement — many others have not done so either, and I do not know whether to thank him — Pakistan remains steadfast.

I will conclude by reiterating our commitment to a peaceful and stable Afghanistan. It is to our own benefit. We have vital stakes in that, as stated by Pakistan's Foreign Minister during the recently held Heart of Asia ministerial conference on the theme "For Pakistan, Kabul is the most important capital of the world."

Meanwhile, it would be inappropriate for me not to welcome the recent policy statement of the International Security Assistance Force on reducing civilian casualties caused by air strikes. I pray that that also applies to other parties.

Our Afghan brethren in Pakistan have suffered for far too long. We hope and pray for an early end to such

a plight so that our two peoples can embark on a joint quest for progress and development, integrated with the rest of a rising Asia and the world.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/462) and Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and Mr. Fedotov for their briefings this morning. I also welcome Ambassador Tanin's contribution to today's debate.

In the past six months, the international community has made significant progress on the commitments made at the December 2011 Bonn Conference. Efforts are now focused on reinforcing our enduring commitment to Afghanistan. That means not only ensuring the security of Afghanistan and its people, but also sustaining the political and economic progress, including through the support of neighbouring countries. I will focus my statement today on the progress being made in those three areas.

First, on the security transition, I welcome the success of the NATO Chicago Summit in May, which saw the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) contributing countries demonstrate our long-term commitment to Afghanistan, in particular by agreeing the NATO strategic plan for Afghanistan, and make incredible contributions towards sustaining the Afghan National Security Forces after 2014. That sent a clear message to the Afghan people that we will not abandon them, and to the insurgency that it cannot wait us out.

The protection of the Afghan civilian population remains at the core of ISAF's military strategy. ISAF forces have worked extremely hard to minimize the level of civilian casualties and have introduced new rules to govern the use of force. As the Secretary-General's report highlights, we have had considerable success in that. That is in stark contrast, of course, to the insurgency, which continues to target civilians indiscriminately.

Secondly, on the political and economic progress, the United Kingdom looks forward to the July Tokyo Development Conference on Afghanistan, hosted by the Government of Japan. It is absolutely vital to Afghanistan's future stability that we send a strong signal of our enduring commitment through the transformation decade 2015 to 2025. Therefore, we, the international community, should look to provide concrete aid pledges for at least the period 2015 to 2017. The United Kingdom has already done so. We call on others in the international community to follow suit.

Alongside such undertakings, the United Kingdom strongly supports all efforts to ensure that Tokyo offers an opportunity for the participation of Afghan civil society, including women. The United Kingdom works closely with the Government of Afghanistan, local and international non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and international partners to improve the status of women in Afghanistan so that they can play a full role in a future peaceful Afghan State.

Of course, the Government of Afghanistan must also deliver on the commitments that it has made to the Afghan people and to the international community, in particular by continuing with key economic and governance reforms and by working towards greater self-reliance. The centrepiece of the Tokyo conference will be a mutual accountability framework, setting out Afghan and international commitments for the post-2014 period. That work will complement the commitments made on security at the Chicago Summit and will move us another step closer to a sustainable future for Afghanistan.

Thirdly, among all the challenges and opportunities facing Afghanistan today, the relationship between Afghanistan and its neighbours is vital, as other speakers have highlighted this morning. At the Heart of Asia ministerial conference in Kabul earlier this month, Afghanistan's neighbours expressed their mutual interest in Afghanistan's long-term stability. The United Kingdom welcomes the assistance provided by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the supporting role of United Nations agencies in the Istanbul process. I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the United Kingdom's readiness to contribute to confidence-building measures, where requested by the region.

The United Kingdom supports a strong UNAMA presence as we move through the transition period, and beyond. UNAMA plays an essential role in coordinating international efforts and in providing the Afghan Government with support in order to deliver on its own commitments. We welcome UNAMA's view that the inevitable financial constraints are a valuable opportunity to ensure that its future operations are closely focused on the core mandate and that the relationship between UNAMA and the United Nations country team is regularly reviewed.

In conclusion, the international community has made real progress against the commitments made at Bonn in December 2011, but there is still work to be done to secure the future of Afghanistan and its people. The United Kingdom remains resolute in our determination to work with the Government of Afghanistan and all international partners in that crucial endeavour.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): I join others in thanking you, Mr. President, for scheduling today's debate on the situation in Afghanistan. I would also like in particular to thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for his statement. We also thank the Secretary-General for his latest report (S/2012/462), and are appreciative of the briefings by Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Executive Director Yuri Fedotov.

India shares a privileged, historical and civilizational relationship with Afghanistan. During the past decade, our relationship has been renewed and consolidated by our contribution to the rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan. India has pledged up to $2 billion in development and humanitarian assistance. We remain unwavering in our commitment to assisting the people of Afghanistan in their endeavour to build a peaceful, stable, democratic and prosperous nation.

With the first meeting of the India-Afghanistan Partnership Council in New Delhi in May 2012, the process of implementing the India-Afghanistan comprehensive strategic partnership agreement has been set in motion. That process will further intensify our broad-based development assistance to Afghanistan in a wide range of sectors that have been identified by the Government of Afghanistan as priority areas for reconstruction and development. We will continue our engagement in reconstruction and rehabilitation projects in alignment with the Afghan National Development Strategy.

We are fully cognizant that the economic viability of Afghanistan depends on its fuller integration into its neighbourhood so that it can regain its historical role as a land bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and Eurasia.

We fully support the work undertaken in favour of regional confidence-building as a critical component of international efforts to support Afghanistan as it takes forward the task of national reconciliation even as it assumes full responsibility for its own security.

India fully supports an inclusive and transparent Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process of reconciliation, as opposed to an internationally led process, accompanied by an inclusive political process and intra-Afghan dialogue, the renunciation of violence, the cutting of ties to terrorist groups, abiding by the Afghan Constitution and its protections for human rights, including the rights of women.

At the Kabul ministerial meeting of the Istanbul process, India expressed its willingness to take the lead in the implementation of two confidence-building measures (CBMs): the Chambers of Commerce CBM and the Commercial Opportunities CBM. Further, India will be hosting the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan in New Delhi tomorrow, 28 June. The objective of the Summit is to attract foreign investment in Afghanistan in the light of new opportunities opening up in various sectors in that country. The Summit will include presentations by the Government of Afghanistan and others on the investment climate and opportunities in Afghanistan, and panel discussions on cross-cutting issues and sector specific themes. Potential regional and international investors, including Indian companies, will participate in the event.

We see the Delhi Investment Summit as a critical link between the Istanbul process and the Tokyo conference to be held on 8 July. The Summit will also be helpful in countering the current narrative of anxiety about withdrawal, reversing it with a narrative of opportunity and hope. We are holding the Summit fully cognizant that the aforementioned CBMs require an atmosphere of security in the country and in the region. Amid the ongoing transition, the security gains achieved in Afghanistan during the past decade are still tenuous and fragile; security concerns remain paramount.

The principal problem in Afghanistan remains the existence of terrorism with ideological, financial and logistical support coming from beyond the country's borders. We need concerted action to isolate and root out the syndicate of terrorism that includes elements of the Al-Qaida, Taliban, Lashkar-e-Toiba and other terrorist and extremist groups. We also need to create an enabling environment in which the Afghan people can live in peace and security and decide their future themselves, without outside interference, coercion or intimidation.

Moving forward, we need sustained international commitment in order to strengthen the Afghan Government's capacity for governance, security and economic development. Enhanced development assistance and foreign investment in Afghanistan and the building of regional linkages are critical to ensuring an irreversible transition in the country.

The Secretary-General's latest report rightly observes that the serious challenges confronting Afghanistan

> "must not ... be underplayed, with the military drawdown and an expected reduction in development assistance giving rise to uncertainty about the sustainability of such gains" (*S/2012/462, para. 60*).

We support the good work being done by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. The international community as a whole must continue to work with renewed vigour and unity of purpose towards strengthening the efforts of the Afghan Government to seek solutions that are inclusive and led by the Afghan people themselves.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/462). We also thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous for his briefing and Ambassador Tanin for his helpful contribution. We would also like to congratulate Mr. Jan Kubiš on the excellent work he has done leading the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), although he is not able to be with us at today's meeting.

We meet today at a time when we find ourselves at a special crossroads of national sovereignty and mutual responsibility and accountability between Afghanistan and the international community. Security transition is under way, and important international and regional conferences have been held, such as those in Kabul and Chicago, not to mention one of the most important ahead of us, to be held in July in Tokyo.

The Secretary-General observes in his report that there is scope for measured optimism with regard to the situation in Afghanistan. However, our optimism hinges on the extent to which the international community upholds its commitments, Afghanistan fully assumes its sovereign responsibilities, and the United Nations consolidates its presence on the ground. According to our assessment of the reporting period and that to come, the challenges are immense. I would like to comment on four areas.

First, we fully support the process of Afghan reconciliation led by the Afghans themselves. We welcome the fact that a Chair for the High Peace Council has finally been appointed, particularly since it is Salahuddin Rabbani. We are encouraged that the process will be newly invigorated since, in the absence of a consolidated reconciliation effort and in the light of the exit of NATO security forces by 2014, it is likely that ongoing crises will continue to become more complicated. The report confirms that the presence of the United Nations will be indispensable beyond 2014. We trust that we will prepare ourselves in a timely manner for the new phase. Likewise, we fully support the good offices of UNAMA.

Secondly, we note that the transition is proceeding normally and we are satisfied that the recent NATO Summit ratified its commitments and recognized the need for its continued participation, including beyond 2014. Likewise, we take note of the announcement by President Karzai of the beginning of the third phase of transfer of security responsibilities to the Afghan forces. However, we would highlight that the transition cannot and must not be limited to security. The sources of insecurity are not limited to physical security, but also include food security, guarantees for human development, human rights and respect for the rule of law.

Thirdly, two days ago we held in this Chamber an open debate on the protection of civilians, which gave us much food for thought (see S/PV.6790). Guatemala remains concerned about the protection of civilians in Afghanistan. Although we note the recent fall in the number of victims, we remain concerned about the calibre of attacks, such as the assassination of a member of the High Peace Council and attacks on schools and people who work in the education system in Afghanistan. We condemn all indiscriminate attacks on civilians, including NATO air raids. Likewise, we find the situation faced by women and children in Afghanistan to be deplorable. We call for tangible measures to be taken in order to protect and guarantee their rights.

Fourthly, I should like to underscore the need for international cooperation, without which the progress that has been made to date could be reversed. That progress must be sustained, and we must be prepared for

a long-term commitment in that respect. We are certain that the Tokyo Conference will be the appropriate forum for consolidating the advances made, with the United Nations leading the process.

In that respect, we take note of the fact that the Mission will be re-evaluating its activities and optimizing its resources in order to focus its efforts on the discharge of its basic mandate. We hope that that exercise will guarantee the availability of the resources necessary to ensure that the Mission's mandate is not adversely affected. Also important are coherence and coordination between humanitarian actors and those involved in development efforts within the framework of UNAMA.

Finally, we reiterate that Guatemala supports Afghanistan's aspirations to move forward along the path towards democracy, prosperity and stability. The international community shares that vision and should make that clear in the form of political will. The current situation is testimony to the need to continue to make progress in electoral reform in accordance with the Constitution, strengthen regional ties and implement confidence-building measures, as well the need for a strong commitment on the part of Afghanistan to good governance, the combat against corruption and drug trafficking, the strengthening of human rights and the consolidation of the rule of law.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): I thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous for his briefing today detailing the important work that the staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) performs every day under very difficult conditions, and Executive Director Fedotov for his briefing on this important issue. I also thank Ambassador Tanin for joining today's discussion. As always, we value his participation and his close cooperation with the Security Council.

In the last few months, the international community has underscored its support for strengthening Afghan leadership and Afghan sovereignty while reinforcing its commitment to Afghanistan well beyond 2014. As President Obama has said, the message to the Afghan people is clear: "As you stand up, you will not stand alone".

This morning I will focus my remarks on recent and upcoming events that have reinforced this message. On 2 May, Afghanistan and the United States signed a strategic partnership agreement. It is one of several bilateral agreements that Afghanistan has concluded that demonstrates how the international community continues to come together to support Afghanistan as it prepares for the transition in 2014. The agreement provides a long-term framework for relations between Afghanistan and the United States after a responsible drawdown of United States forces. It reaffirms the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan. I want to be clear that the United States does not seek any permanent American military bases.

The post-2014 United States presence will be shaped in close consultation with the Afghan Government and will support Afghanistan's social and economic development, security, institutions and regional cooperation. The agreement enshrines a range of mutual commitments, including on combating terrorism and strengthening democratic institutions.

The United States welcomes the strong Afghan commitment to strengthening accountability, transparency and oversight and to protecting the human rights of all Afghans — men and women. Afghanistan and the United States have taken steps together to show that Afghanistan's progress will be irreversible and that our commitment is real and enduring.

The strategic partnership is just one piece of a larger international effort to work with the Afghans for a successful transition. At the NATO summit held in Chicago in May, world leaders reaffirmed the Lisbon framework for transition in Afghanistan and further outlined the support that the alliance and individual nations will provide to the Afghan military and police after 2014. As the Afghans assume full responsibility for security by the end of 2014, the enemies of the Afghan people should know that there will be steadfast and capable Afghan forces standing against them, with strong NATO support.

President Karzai's recent announcement of the third of five tranches of areas to transition to Afghan security lead is an important step forward. As transition begins in those areas, nearly 75 per cent of the population of Afghanistan will be living in provinces, districts and villages where Afghan forces are beginning to lead. That would not be possible without the growing strength of the Afghan National Security Forces, which remain essential to our shared goal of an Afghanistan that can secure and govern itself.

The transition is on track. Afghans are increasingly standing up for their own security and future, and NATO remains united in its support for the Lisbon timetable and an enduring commitment to Afghanistan.

The region is also supporting Afghanistan through its transition. We applaud the recent Heart of Asia ministerial Conference in Kabul, which endorsed a process of continuous dialogue and confidence-building measures that will contribute to achieving regional peace and stability, and we welcome the positive role that UNAMA played in helping to ensure that the Conference was a success.

Security improvements will also contribute to the sustainable reintegration of returning Afghans and enable economic opportunity. We are encouraged by the success of the International Conference on Afghan refugees organized in May by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and urge the United Nations to continue to focus attention on the needs of high-return communities to ensure voluntary and sustainable reintegration.

The March Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan, held in Dushanbe, accelerated Afghanistan's growing connections with its South and Central Asian neighbours. We also applaud the private-sector conference being hosted in New Delhi this week to promote investment in Afghanistan's people and industries.

We look forward to the Tokyo Conference next week, which is an important opportunity for the Afghan Government to clearly commit to improving governance and intensifying the fight against corruption. Those reforms are vital. Afghanistan cannot rely on donor financing indefinitely. Sustainable development requires private investment and improved regional connectivity. As Afghanistan makes progress on governance and anti-corruption, the United States and the international community will take concrete steps of our own to help, as we promised at Bonn. Despite serious fiscal challenges of our own, our continued investment in Afghanistan is essential, and it should come from both Governments and the private sector.

The coming months will be a dynamic time for Afghanistan. The Afghan people, the international community, the United Nations and UNAMA have been unfaltering in their commitment to Afghanistan. I want to underscore the enduring importance of the work of the United Nations and UNAMA, from its good offices to promote regional cooperation and co-chairing of the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board, to its humanitarian assistance and support for refugees and internally displaced persons. The United Nations has remained steadfastly committed to the Afghan people, and we are grateful. The Afghan Government and people, the region and the international community have demonstrated their resolve and long-term commitment to a secure, stable and prosperous Afghanistan. The United States will work with all of them every step of the way.

Mr. Cabral (Portugal): Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor and organizing this debate. I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous and Executive Director Yuri Fedotov for their briefings. I also welcome the presence of Ambassador Tanin and his statement. They have all given us a broad and accurate depiction of the current situation in Afghanistan and described the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

I would like to focus now on three points that Portugal deems of outstanding importance.

First, I would like to mention capacity-building within the Afghan National Security Forces now that the third tranche of the transition is under way and that the Chicago Summit has determined that the NATO-led combat mission in Afghanistan will cease in 2014. Professional, capable and sustainable security forces are absolutely indispensable if a free, independent and democratic Afghanistan is to provide essential services and goods to its population and to continue to play its role in the region and in the world.

Portugal entirely supports the efforts to focus on the training of security forces, particularly the police, and to ensure that they are more professional and better equipped, both in materiel and in capacity to deliver. As such, I believe that the following sentence in the Secretary-General's report clearly illustrates a crucial capacity for the security forces to have in the very specific Afghan framework:

> "The United Nations continues to advocate for attention to accountability mechanisms within the Afghan security forces, ensuring the protection of civilians and children amid conflict, as well as the specific needs of women and girls as a central component of transition and post-transition security frameworks." (*S/2012/462, para. 12*)

In this regard, measures taken recently to prioritize community-based policing, strengthen crime detection and prevention, safeguard human rights and combat violence against women and children cannot but be commended and encouraged. We find it particularly noteworthy that the national police plan sets a truly ambitious goal of inducting 5,000 women into the police by 2014. Women agents are essential elements for addressing serious cases of crimes against women and girls, and have shown all over the world that their action has a tangible impact in the fight against gender-based violence and the promotion and protection of the human rights of women.

Secondly, I would like to mention the issue of human rights in Afghanistan. The challenges caused by the security situation in the country are of the utmost seriousness and defy the time constraints of a Security Council debate. Suffice it to say this time that Portugal is encouraged by the declining trend in civilian casualties, and we hope that it may be maintained over time. We continue to witness the most blatant disrespect for civilians by the insurgents, to whom more than 80 per cent of all casualties can safely be attributed. Reaction by the authorities of Afghanistan is imperative, not only as an element of the ongoing struggle for peace in the country, but also as a matter of addressing the essential needs of the population.

As regards the human rights of women, we hear of efforts to achieve the adherence of the Government of Afghanistan to the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. The development of an action plan to implement the resolution appears to us to be a very relevant instrument for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law, and is in line, furthermore, with the mutual commitments assumed at the Bonn Conference. The Afghan Government and security forces may count on Portugal's full support and available expertise for that task.

Finally, I would say a few brief words on the multilateral efforts undertaken by both Afghanistan and its friends and partners throughout the world. "Geography is destiny" has become a catchphrase, sometimes all too easily misused. Afghanistan consistently shows that it can find friends and partners that are at a great distance but are clearly and seriously committed to a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan. The path chosen by Afghanistan — the path of international partnership and productive interaction with its neighbours — provides an opportunity for the development of its resources. It shows, at the same time, how truly regional and international the problems that afflict Afghanistan are. These include issues such as counter-narcotics, energy and transportation networks, which require international cooperation at its highest level.

I conclude by reiterating my country's support for the work of UNAMA. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan has played and will continue to play an essential role in strengthening Afghan institutions towards peace, democracy and the promotion and protection of human rights, and in supporting Afghanistan's full assumption of leadership and ownership in the security, governance and development areas.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous for his briefing, Mr. Yuri Fedotov for his statement on the drug situation, and our colleague Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for sharing with the Council his national vision with regard to the country's situation.

In his report (S/2012/426), the Secretary-General expresses his views on the evolution of the transition towards Afghan responsibility and leadership in the area of security, including the fact that 75 per cent of the Afghan population is now located in areas where national forces have taken control.

We welcome the fact that no significant deterioration in public order has taken place and that there has been no marked change in security trends in the transition areas. There are positive signs, but there remain certain areas of vulnerability that must be overcome — hence the Secretary-General's use of the term "cautious optimism" (S/2012/426, para. 60).

The capacity and professionalism of the Afghan security and police forces must continue to be enhanced, including through the institutionalization of mechanisms for accountability and fighting impunity while strengthening measures to protect civilians, ensure respect for human rights, and secure the command and control structure. The contribution of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan will continue to be essential to that end.

In this respect, I would like to highlight the declaration issued by the Heads of State and Government

of ISAF troop-contributing countries during the Chicago Summit. In that declaration, they reiterated their commitment to the security of Afghanistan beyond 2014 and announced that the NATO force will thereafter cease to be a combat force and will be converted into a new training, advice and assistance mission.

We must not minimize the potential impact of the reduction of military personnel and development on the economic situation in terms of job losses and even increases in humanitarian needs. Therefore, a national political consensus must be prioritized and international cooperation and support in the long term must be guaranteed. We stress the need to maintain a broad and balanced approach during the transition that would take into account not only the security situation, but also socio-economic development, governance and the rule of law.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the Special Representative must continue to guide international cooperation and assistance activities and stress the empowerment and strengthening of the role of Afghan institutions so that they are able to shoulder their responsibilities in priority areas, facilitating the political process towards peace and reconciliation, security, governance, economic development and regional cooperation. The United Nations must continue to play a central role in the coordination of international efforts with national authorities in order to ensure their consistency with the priorities identified by Afghanistan and to avoid duplication of efforts.

Violence continues to be one of the main factors affecting the Afghan population.

The progress in the political and reconciliation process has been affected by numerous security incidents, including the 48 reported last week, which resulted in many civilian victims. It is important that all parties show clearly that they are committed to the process of dialogue and reconciliation being pursued by the Afghan Government. We are confident that the difficulties can be overcome and that the Taliban will commit themselves to renouncing violence and terrorism and will accept the Constitution.

Violence is also affecting the humanitarian situation, and therefore pressure must be brought to bear on all parties to the conflict to ensure that they respect humanitarian principles and allow humanitarian assistance to reach those that need it most. That should be an essential principle of participation in the process of reconciliation.

With regard to the global drug problem as it affects Afghanistan and the region, we listened with interest to what Mr. Fedotov said with regard to the increase in financial and technical cooperation between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Government of Afghanistan, with the primary goal of strengthening the capacity of national authorities. Those efforts should go hand-in-hand with the strengthening of alternative development programmes that provide viable and sustainable options to those who abandon the growing and production of illicit drugs.

We would also stress the regional joint initiatives that have been undertaken and the constructive and ongoing cooperation of various regional and extraregional actors in such strategies for applying the principle of shared responsibility. Colombia once again expresses its readiness to work bilaterally with Afghanistan in order to address that and other aspects of organized crime.

We have high hopes for the Tokyo conference that will be held on 8 July. There the international community should reiterate its commitment to work towards a stable, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan. It should also pass on the message that the country will not be abandoned in terms of its social and development needs after the stage of transition and that that partnership will be maintained during the decade of its transformation. Although the donors must avoid making unrealistic demands and acknowledge the limits of the institutional capacity, there must be mutual commitments that will enable us to regularly analyse long-term commitments, including the adoption of measures to fight crime and corruption.

The Kabul process and the national priority programmes should continue to be the policies that govern the commitments and responsibilities of the process within the framework of the principles of Afghan ownership and leadership and with respect for the sovereignty and unity of the country.

Consensus for deepening and expanding the relationship between Afghanistan and the international community should contribute to consolidating the State and its ability to exercise its primary responsibilities and respond to the needs of the population. There continue to be numerous challenges to stability and that is why a sustainable transition requires a State structure

that can guarantee governability and economic stability at the local and national levels. That will include the creation of jobs and economic opportunities, as well as the provision of and access to justice. Those are fundamental elements in order to guarantee a successful transition in Afghanistan.

Mr. Laher (South Africa): South Africa thanks the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, for introducing the quarterly report of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan (S/2012/462). We also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Yuri Fedotov, for his briefing. We welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan in this debate and thank him for sharing the views of his delegation.

In assessing the situation in Afghanistan over the past three months, it is clear that while some progress has been made, particularly towards strengthening Afghan leadership and ownership, there have been setbacks that undermine the progress achieved. We wish to reiterate that political dialogue and reconciliation are critical for ensuring sustainable peace in Afghanistan. Clearly, there can be no military solution to the conflict there. We therefore welcome the Afghan Government's persistent initiatives to engage with the armed opposition and the continued calls by President Karzai for the armed opposition to lay down their arms. In that regard, we welcome the appointment of Salahuddin Rabbani as Chair of the High Peace Council and his stated objective of improving the inclusiveness of the Council.

We were optimistic at attempts to foster peace and reconciliation by the engagement of all parties. It is pivotal for the long-term stability of Afghanistan that all political role-players overcome their differences and commit to national reconciliation and a political solution.

We welcome the legal and legislative framework that is currently being put in place to ensure fair, transparent and inclusive presidential elections in 2014. While those processes are commendable, those efforts should not detract attention away from crucial contemporary challenges.

My delegation is concerned about the incidents of violence directed against women and the challenges that women continue to face in the economic, social and cultural spheres.

In spite of the decrease in security incidents and civilian casualties during the reporting period, there has been a rise of targeted killings of civilians, including children, and an ongoing campaign of violence directed at schools and educators. Those acts should be condemned. Civilian casualties resulting from International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) air-strikes, as well as anti-Government use of improvised explosive devices, remain a concern. We wish to underline that all the armed elements operating in Afghanistan have the responsibility for ensuring that unarmed civilians are protected. A failure by both State and non-State actors to uphold that responsibility should not go unpunished. The Secretary-General, in his ninth report on the protection of civilians (S/2012/376), underlined the importance of accountability. In that regard, we are reminded that in its presidential statement on justice and the rule of law (S/PRST/2012/1), adopted on 19 January, the Security Council reiterated its call to all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and to take all required steps to protect civilians.

We are concerned by recent developments that again witnessed increased tensions between members of the local communities and the ISAF. We call on the ISAF to undertake efforts to mitigate the loss of civilian life and ensure respect for the cultural and religious heritage of the population.

Ensuring the long-term protection of civilians requires building national institutions in the area of the rule of law, justice and security sector reform. In that regard, we welcome the fact that the surge target strength of the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army is ahead of their 2012 targets. We note the timeline for the international military drawdown and the commitment for a post-ISAF mission to conduct training and development of the Afghan security services, announced at the NATO Chicago Summit.

Security in Afghanistan at a national level should continue to be reinforced by efforts at a regional level to consolidate peace, stability and development. We therefore welcome the political dialogue and cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours during the reporting period. There has been significant bilateral contact between Afghanistan and the countries of the region, which has resulted in strengthened economic, political, security and socio-cultural links. Those initiatives were bolstered by the recently held Heart of Asia ministerial conference in Kabul. The upcoming

Delhi conference, which will focus on investment, is also a welcome initiative.

There can be no doubt that there is an inextricable link between development and security in Afghanistan. The socio-economic and humanitarian challenges confronted by Afghanistan are significant. It is therefore important that, despite the financial situation facing the international community, we should continue our support to the Government and people of Afghanistan, in line with the commitments of the Bonn Conference in the area of direct financial support, and towards the country's long-term economic growth. The upcoming Tokyo conference will therefore be important in consolidating global support for Afghanistan's development and long-term economic sustainability, and also in ensuring that the gains registered over the past 10 years are not reversed. We note that Afghanistan will present a comprehensive action plan on self-reliance on their national priority programmes at that meeting. That is commendable and it affirms the Afghan ownership of its own development.

In conclusion, we wish to stress that national ownership and leadership is crucial to achieving political, security and socio-economic progress in Afghanistan. For its part, the international community should continue its supportive role in the country's move from conflict to stability and prosperity.

South Africa stresses that given the magnitude of these challenges, a comprehensive strategy incorporating security, humanitarian efforts, good governance and socio-economic development is required. In this regard, we wish to underscore the central role of UNAMA in supporting the Government of Afghanistan and coordinating international assistance to the country. The continued role played by bilateral and multilateral partners remains indispensable.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in Afghanistan and the vital role played by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in supporting the Afghan national authorities. I also thank Mr. Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for his briefing on the impact of drug trafficking and organized crime on the stability and development of that country.

The national perspective outlined by Ambassador Tanin was of very useful to us, and I thank him for his statement.

Despite the major challenges that persist, the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/462) notes positive and encouraging developments in the security transition, human development and the building of institutional frameworks in Afghanistan. At the political level, the appointment of Mr. Salahuddin Rabbani as Chair of the High Peace Council, the approval of the Afghan Government by Parliament, the confirmation of Mr. Abdul Malek Kamawi to the Supreme Court, and efforts to strengthen the electoral framework are all significant and welcome developments.

At the regional level, we note the ongoing dynamic of cooperation and mutual confidence-building that was launched at the Istanbul conference and bolstered by such specific actions as the strategic partnership agreement between India and Afghanistan; the framework agreement between Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India on the transport of gas; the establishment of two working groups responsible for facilitating peace efforts; and, of course, agreed confidence-building measures. We welcome efforts to strengthen border security and the fight against drug trafficking, organized crime and illegal migration. These developments allow us to hope for a stable, reconciled and democratic Afghanistan enjoying the support of the international community.

Despite significant improvements in the security situation thanks to the launching of the third transition phase, ongoing targeted assassinations, the use of improvised explosive devices, and attacks on educational institutions by armed groups are a source of concern. In particular, given the trend — stressed earlier by Mr. Ladsous — of a fall in the number of incidents and a rise in the number of victims, we hope that an increase in the ranks of the national and local police, including by adding women, will help to reduce the number of innocent victims and lower the number of internally displaced persons and refugees.

The humanitarian situation, which is a direct consequence of the security situation, requires our full attention as it affects an extremely vulnerable and impoverished population. We regret the constant rise in the number of displaced persons. The situation requires the international community and humanitarian actors working in that country — to whom we pay

tribute — to deploy sustained efforts to continue to mitigate the suffering of the Afghan people.

Next month will see the holding of the Tokyo conference on Afghanistan. That meeting gives rise to great hope, not just for the Afghan people, but for the entire region. It will offer the opportunity to the international community as a whole to reaffirm its multidimensional commitment to bringing peace, stability and development to Afghanistan in order to prepare it to stand on its own two feet. We must ensure that the conference meets the expectations and requirements of the situation, as well as the aspirations of the Afghan people.

Mr. Kandangha-Bariki (Togo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous and Mr. Yuri Fedotov for their briefings, which have the Security Council a good overview of the situation. I also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for his statement.

On 20 March, the Council held a debate (see S/PV.6735) highlighting the remaining challenges in Afghanistan. Three months later, we are compelled to note that these challenges continue to monopolize our attention as we attempt to help that country to escape violence, insecurity and instability. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/462) shows that, generally speaking, the situation in Afghanistan remains precarious due to ongoing violence.

The bloody attacks that have taken place do not spare civilians or the defence and security forces. Political and religious leaders, too, continue to pay the price for these intimidation campaigns. The assassination on 13 May of a member of the High Peace Council speaks volumes about that climate of terror. Togo condemns such killings and all violence committed against women and children by anti-Government forces, who do not hesitate to also attack schools.

We deplore the aerial attacks undertaken by the coalition forces, which sometimes also claim civilian victims. These acts of violence naturally exacerbate the situation of asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons. The humanitarian operations launched to assist these people face restrictions or, in some cases, are simply suspended, whereas — as pointed out by Ms. Valerie Amos on 17 May — these populations require urgent humanitarian aid and assistance. My country firmly hopes that the new Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, set out in Geneva in May, will help us to identify the measures and actions necessary to help Afghan refugees.

Despite the acts that I have referred to, which inspire bitterness and disapproval, we note a glimmer of hope, in particular in the peace process that has been launched among political actors. In that regard, we welcome the efforts of President Hamid Karzai to pursue the peace process. Although that process is currently experiencing difficulties due to diverging positions among the parties involved, we retain the hope that they will return to the negotiating table as soon as possible.

Togo therefore encourages them to pursue dialogue in order to restore peace and security to the country. We note the announcement made by the Afghan President that he will not stand as a candidate in the next presidential election. We urge him to adopt all measures necessary to a free and transparent election. In that respect, we welcome the positive role played by the Afghan Parliament in adopting relevant laws. We further welcome the support provided by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and all the United Nations agencies, particularly the United Nations Development Programme through its technical assistance to the Independent Electoral Commission.

The signing of a strategic partnership between the Presidents of Afghanistan and the United States on 1 May, the partnership agreements with Germany and Australia and the announcement that a partnership had been agreed with China add to our hopes in an already favourable regional context. Political dialogue and cooperation with the countries of the region are undergoing visible changes following the holding of various meeting, such as the Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan, the fifth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan and the sixth trilateral meeting between Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United States. We welcome the ongoing efforts being made by Afghanistan's friends, alongside international organizations, to bring peace to the country.

Now that international forces have announced their final withdrawal for the end of 2014, we must call on Afghan authorities, the country's friends, States of the region and development and financial institutions to step up their cooperation in order to overcome the numerous obstacles that continue to hamper Afghanistan's development.

We have great hopes for the conference to be held in Tokyo on 8 July, which we believe will produce significant commitments with regard to financing the projects that will be presented at the meeting.

We once again reiterate our support to UNAMA and all of the United Nations agencies and programmes that, under very difficult conditions, continue to work to help bring peace, security and stability to Afghanistan.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan): I thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and Executive Director Fedotov for their briefings today. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/462) on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. I would also like to thank our colleague Ambassador Tanin for his statement.

The adoption of resolution 2041 (2012) by the Security Council in March and the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan mandate were a clear indication of the United Nations long-term commitment to the security, stability and prosperity of Afghanistan. The commitment of the international community to that goal was further solidified by the outcomes of series of international events, among which of particular significance was the Chicago summit of the Government of Afghanistan and the contributing nations of the International Security Assistance Force. The declaration on Afghanistan adopted at the summit marked an important milestone, reconfirming the continuation of close and robust international partnership with Afghanistan beyond the end of the transition period.

The Government of Afghanistan continues to make great progress towards the stabilization and development of the country. It is of paramount importance to keep the steady pace of progress attained so far, which requires an equal level of continued determination from both Afghanistan and its international partners. The conclusion of landmark strategic partnership agreements between Afghanistan and its bilateral partners will further reinforce individual commitments towards a stable, secure and prosperous Afghanistan.

We welcome the positive developments in the political realm in Afghanistan. The appointment of a new head of the High Peace Council will undoubtedly reinvigorate the work of that important body and will further contribute to taking forward a broad and inclusive peace process at the central and local levels. An inclusive Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, in accordance with the Constitution of Afghanistan and with the support of the international community, is an essential element of overall stabilization and an absolute prerequisite for achieving durable peace in the country.

Although the overall security situation in the country remains precarious — with continued armed clashes, assassinations and suicide attacks by insurgents, which pose a serious threat to the overall peace and stabilization effort in Afghanistan — we nevertheless observe a decrease in a number of security incidents during the reporting period. Meanwhile, we also take positive note of the general progress and tranquillity in the areas undergoing the process of transition to full Afghan security responsibility.

Afghanistan's enhanced political dialogue and cooperation with its immediate neighbours and other regional counterparts on a broad spectrum of issues based on a common vision and mutual confidence is an imperative for the peaceful and stable future of the country and the region. We welcome Afghanistan's and its regional partners' continuous efforts and achievements in that regard.

That being said, we stress the particular importance of the decisions of the follow-up Heart of Asia ministerial conference held in Kabul on 14 June — on the establishment of annual high-level political consultations between Afghanistan and its near and extended neighbours concerning all issues of common interest, as well as on the implementation of confidence-building measures covering the areas of political and security and economic cooperation.

As the transition period continues towards the eventual withdrawal of international military forces and the assumption of overall security responsibility by Afghan authorities by the end of 2014, the scope and gravity of the security and development tasks that the Government of Afghanistan has to deal with are growing, and the need for the international community's enhanced support to the Government of Afghanistan is becoming even more vital.

Azerbaijan has for many years actively contributed to the international efforts in Afghanistan. My country joined ISAF almost at its beginning and has steadily increased its military contribution to it. We believe that capacity-building for Afghan institutions must remain at the heart of international assistance in order

to enable the Government of Afghanistan to exercise its sovereign authority in all its functions. At present, we are expanding our engagement in non-military spheres by contributing to the development of capacity-building in Afghanistan. We recently contributed €1 million to Afghanistan's National Army Foundation as part of our non-military engagement, and we have pledged additional financial support.

Azerbaijan has also decided to participate in the confidence-building measures on counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, chambers of commerce, commercial opportunities, regional infrastructure and education. In addition, we have expressed our willingness to lead the implementation of the confidence-building measures on counter-narcotics and on regional infrastructure.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my country's commitment to Afghanistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity, and I reassure the Council of my Government's determination to remain an active contributor to collective efforts in Afghanistan.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Ladsous and Mr. Fedotov for their comprehensive briefings. We look forward to renewing the tradition of personal presentations by the heads of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and meetings of the Security Council. We reaffirm our support for the work of Mr. Jan Kubiš. We are also grateful to Ambassador Tanin for his interesting briefing.

Everything we have heard today serves to confirm that it is impossible to tackle the problems in Afghanistan solely with military means. We need to formulate a strategy of sustainable development for the country for the post-2014 period, as well as establish measures and international community for long-term stabilization, including in the socio-economic sphere. We look forward to substantive discussions on national and regional development programmes for Afghanistan during the Tokyo conference.

Russia is willing to participate in the rebuilding of the Salang tunnel and the nitrogen fertilizer factory and power plant in Mazar-e-Sharif, as well to build several hydro-power stations. Together with our Afghan partners, we have begun to modernize the Kabul house-building factory. One of the priority areas for our cooperation is to revive and develop Afghanistan's minerals and raw materials base. We believe that good examples of regional cooperation could include the project to create a system of CASA-1000 substations. Russia, without waiting for other potential partners to come forward, has announced its willingness to invest $500 million in that regard. We are also willing to help with the building of the TAPI pipeline.

Regardless of the form national reconciliation takes, a leading role must be played by the Afghans themselves. Dialogue with the armed opposition should be built upon the three well-known principles. The insurgents must renounce violence, recognize the Constitution and sever ties with Al-Qaida. We must not be tempted to weaken those principles in order to achieve dialogue. That would become counter-productive. We must effectively support the Security Council sanctions regime as a key counter-terrorism instrument.

We are concerned by the idea of replacing ISAF with another military presence in Afghanistan and in neighbouring States, as that could lead to additional instability. Any residual military presence should not counter the interests of Afghanistan's neighbours and other countries in the region. Full clarity is necessary in the possible planning of a new NATO operation in Afghanistan, including its mandate, strength and mission. Such an operation should be sanctioned by the Security Council, however, only after the ISAF mission reports to the Security Council on the implementation of its mandate. In that context, we view the participation of NATO representatives at our meeting today as NATO's recognition of that necessity.

Yet, we are forced to note that the reports we have received from Brussels tend to embellish the general picture. In order to understand what is necessary and what remains to be done in order to rectify the situation, we need an objective analysis — 2014 is almost upon us.

One of the most pressing problems is the illegal production, trade and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan, which is a threat to international peace and stability. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), opiate production in the country in 2011 soared by 61 per cent and the surface area of poppy fields expanded by 7 per cent.

In that respect, a top priority — above all for the Afghan Government but also for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) — is to destroy the poppy fields and infrastructure for the production of drugs. We are not convinced by the arguments against the practice of chemical destruction of drug crops,

which has been tried and tested in other parts of the world. Excessive lenience in combating the drug threat will not help to win the hearts and minds of ordinary Afghans, but will only win the hearts and minds of the drug barons who exploit them.

We must make full use of the experience of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in intercepting drug trafficking and the related financing sources. Our proposal to forge counter-drug interaction between the CSTO and ISAF remains on the table. I recently met here in New York with a senior NATO official and was pleased to hear that NATO was open to pragmatic cooperation with the CSTO on that specific matter. We look forward to an official, positive response from NATO.

A good example of collective work was the 16 February ministerial conference in Vienna of the partners of the Paris Pact initiative on combating illicit trafficking in Afghan opiates. It guaranteed progressive development of the Paris-Moscow process, which is helping to shape a broad international coalition against the Afghan drug threat.

For our part, we are ready to continue assisting our Afghan friends in combating illicit drug trafficking, training personnel and equipping the counter-drug units, on a bilateral basis as well as through the United Nations and regional formats.

We see great potential in the implementation of the training programme for Afghan drug police at the all-Russian advanced training centre in Domodedovo. It was launched as part of a UNODC regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries based on concerns that despite the efforts of the Afghan authorities, supported by a sizeable foreign military contingent, extremists continued to actively operate throughout the country, gaining ground in regions where security responsibilities had been handed over to the Afghans.

In particular, we are concerned by the situation in northern Afghanistan, where, following counter-terrorist operations, terrorists are being flushed out, creating a direct threat to the security of our Central Asian partners from the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Instability in Afghanistan is significantly fuelled by the increasingly frequent cases of desecration and blatant war crimes committed by foreign troops, as well as cases of erroneous air strikes that lead to numerous civilian victims. We need to step up our efforts to prevent such incidents.

The drawdown of foreign troops should be offset by increasing the combat readiness of the Afghan army and police until they are in a position to fully guarantee their country's security. It would be unwise to establish an artificial timeline for a pull-out.

In such conditions, what is particularly relevant is the regional dimension of interaction when it comes to Afghanistan. We support the announcement on 14 June during the Kabul conference, of a channel for regional cooperation, including through the implementation of confidence-building measures.

The socio-economic recovery of Afghanistan is a top priority for us in that respect in the context of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the CSTO. We welcome the adoption, at the summit of SCO heads of State and Government held in Beijing on 6 and 7 June, of the decision to give Afghanistan observer status in the organization, which also provides it an opportunity to join in the work of the regional counter-terrorism structures and the practical implementation of the SCO counter-drugs strategy for 2011-2016.

Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Mr. Yuri Fedotov and Ambassador Tanin for their presentations.

I align myself with the statement to be made later on by the observer of the European Union.

The NATO Summit that was just held this past month in Chicago set a timetable for the development of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) as well as objectives for a professional, credible and sustainable Afghan security force. It endorsed the principle of creating a new NATO mission that will, starting 2015, be mandated to provide training, advice and assistance to the Afghan armed forces. I am pleased that Mr. Evans, of the NATO International Secretariat, will present his results to the Council today.

The regional process launched in Istanbul last November has been boosted by the ministerial meeting on 14 June in Kabul. At that time, France stated its interest in participating in the development of confidence-building measures aimed at the fight against drugs and terrorism as well as natural disaster mitigation. We are also ready to participate in a new meeting on the margins of the General Assembly in

New York, if the Afghan authorities believe that will be useful. Regional cooperation remains one of the keys to Afghanistan's future and, as a result, a priority for us all.

We thank Mr. Kubiš for his commitment in preparing the economic conference to be held on 8 July in Tokyo. The adoption of five new national priority programmes will help to advance the formulation of Afghan priorities. We hope that the conference will also define mutual commitments for the transformation decade, in particular with respect to the need for the Afghans to define a timetable and modalities for the next national elections. We hope that an agreement can be reached in establishing a cross-cutting anti-drug trafficking mechanism, which is one of the main challenges for Afghanistan, its neighbours and the international community as a whole.

France's actions are based on the framework defined by NATO in Lisbon and Chicago. Surobi and Kapisa, where our troops are deployed, form part of the second and third tranches of the transition process, which is now a reality for 75 per cent of the Afghans.

We will progressively scale down our military presence. Our combat mission will conclude at the end of the year, leaving on the front line the third brigade of the Afghan army, which has already shown its combat capabilities.

We will continue to help train the Afghan police and army as part of ISAF, until 2014. In addition, our actions will be based on the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed by the President of France and President Karzai in Paris on 27 January. The 2012-2016 action plan that is part of that agreement will be given substance by a significant increase in our civilian engagement in the areas of health care, education, agriculture, cultural exchange, mining resources and infrastructure. Naturally, we are committed to harmonizing such action with the priorities of the Afghan Government.

In Chicago, the Secretary-General reaffirmed that the United Nations would continue to support the Afghan Government. The United Nations will therefore play an important role in the context of the transition. The United Nations sanctions regime must continue to be used as a confidence-building measure in intra-Afghan reconciliation, rewarding those who have made the choice of peace and punishing those who want to pursue the path of violence.

We will consider, in that respect, requests for de-listing, listing and exemptions conveyed to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) by the Afghan Government. It is important, however, for the Government to take ownership of that instrument by proposing new entities for listing. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan will be increasingly at the heart of the efforts of the international community as it develops and moves towards a civilian-supported presence.

France endorses the three poles recently identified by the Secretariat as being at the heart of the Mission's work beyond 2014: political good offices; human rights, particularly the rights of women; and consistency of international aid. Proper cooperation with the funds and programmes remains key in terms of electoral reform, countering drug trafficking, supporting the Afghan police, the reintegration of insurgents and aid to refugees. On all these fronts, we are pleased to continue working with the United Nations as the central actor for the future of Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

I thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and the Executive Director of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Fedotov, for their briefings. I also thank the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, for his statement.

Thanks to the concerted efforts of the Government and people of Afghanistan, and with the support of the international community, recently there has been positive progress in the situation in Afghanistan. China supports continued adherence to the principle of Afghan-led and Afghan-owned activities in promoting the Kabul process so as to achieve lasting peace, stability and development.

I wish to stress the following points. First, China supports the reconciliation and reintegration process led by the Afghan Government and welcomes the appointment of the new Chair, Mr. Rabbani, to the High Peace Council. We hope that the relevant parties in Afghanistan will remain committed to an inclusive political dialogue and peace process so as to achieve national reconciliation. It is of vital importance that the next general election in Afghanistan be held smoothly. China welcomes the preparation carried out by the Afghan Government in that regard.

Secondly, China notes the recent decline in the number of security incidents in Afghanistan and the increased response capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces. We welcome the fact that the handover of security responsibilities from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to the Afghan National Security Forces has entered the third tranche. At the same time, we hope that, in implementing the drawdown plans, the relevant parties will take into full consideration the need to maintain security and stability in Afghanistan, and that the drawdown will be carried out in a smooth and orderly manner.

Thirdly, we have witnessed incidents recently that have claimed heavy civilian casualties. We note that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has expressed its concern about the civilian casualties caused by air strikes. All parties to armed conflict should abide by international humanitarian law and relevant international law and fulfil their obligations to protect civilians.

Fourthly, narcotics are toxic to the reconstruction and peace process in Afghanistan. China appreciates the efforts of the Afghan Government in combating illicit drugs and welcomes the continued cooperation between UNODC and the Afghan authorities in support of the implementation of the country's national drug control plan.

Fifthly, the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan require the continued attention and support of the international community. The potential negative impact of the transition period on the country's economic and social development deserves our keen attention. China hopes that the recent spate of international conferences on Afghanistan will help to encourage the international community to make good on its commitments and to develop a long-term strategy to support Afghanistan.

Last but not least, China commends the United Nations for its role in facilitating the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan, and supports UNAMA's central coordinating role in facilitating the international community's assistance to the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan. We hope that UNAMA will continue to strengthen its communication, coordination and cooperation with the Afghan authority.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Prior to giving the floor to the representatives of non-Council members, I wish to request that they limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor the representative of Australia.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): I thank you, Mr. President, and Under-Secretary-General Ladsous, Executive Director Fedotov and our close colleague, Ambassador Tanin.

The year 2012 is proving, obviously, to be a major milestone for Afghanistan. The Chicago Summit's recommitment to Afghanistan was an unmistakable statement to the insurgency. The commitments to resourcing the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) after 2014 were significant, as was the agreement that NATO would lead a mission to train, advise and assist the ANSF, including Afghan special forces. Australia itself will contribute $100 million per year towards ANSF sustainability and provide training to the ANSF after 2014. We will consider a special forces contribution, with the agreement of the Afghan Government and under the right mandate. To underpin this long-term commitment, Afghan President Karzai and Australian Prime Minister Gillard signed a comprehensive long-term partnership in Chicago.

As the Secretary-General has highlighted, the insurgency continues to threaten peace and stability, but its momentum has been severely degraded and security conditions remain good in areas that have transitioned thus far. But as we know, to ensure security gains are properly sustained, we need to redouble our efforts to support Afghanistan's economic growth and development.

We support the Secretary-General's call for next month's Tokyo conference to deliver a very clear message that Afghanistan will not be abandoned in its social and development needs. We must identify those needs and the resources required and available to meet them. Clear financial commitments from international partners will be needed. To this end, Australia has committed to increasing its own development assistance from $165 million to $250 million per year.

As we know, the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will become even more important as the transition process advances. Therefore, the cuts to UNAMA's budget, foreshadowed by the Secretary-General, will require

some hard, dexterous and creative reprioritization of UNAMA's efforts, but its core mission to support and underpin successful, enduring transition in Afghanistan must be preserved. We encourage UNAMA to consult closely with international partners on arrangements for its ongoing presence.

Successful presidential and parliamentary elections in 2014 and 2015 are, of course, indispensable for future stability in Afghanistan. But clarity about the future political process is needed quickly to ensure that the necessary planning and preparations can begin. We welcome the assurance in the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/462) that the United Nations will remain an active partner in coordinating international assistance in the next round of elections, and we look forward to ongoing close cooperation among UNAMA, the Afghan authorities and the international community, including ourselves, in support of credible and inclusive electoral processes.

Reconciliation and reintegration have a long way to go, but the insurgents need to understand that there is no alternative to them. UNAMA's own support for peace and reconciliation efforts remains important. Reconciliation is obviously a complex and protracted process, but we know that lasting stability in Afghanistan can be achieved only through dialogue and Afghan-led processes of reconciliation and reintegration.

We commend the Secretary-General for highlighting the important role that women can and should play in shaping positive outcomes. Gender issues remain decisive for a successful Afghanistan, and we expect that they will be central to much of the discussion at the Tokyo conference.

In concluding, as we are all aware, Afghanistan will become stable only if a secure external environment is achieved. The Heart of Asia process, including the recent Kabul ministerial conference, is foundational to achieving this goal, and we commend the leadership of Turkey in particular in this process.

The implementation of the confidence-building measures from the Kabul ministerial conference will be a significant next step. Australia has committed to supporting the Heart of Asia countries in implementing such measures for education and commercial opportunities. We also thank Kazakhstan for its offer to host the next ministerial meeting in the first half of 2013.

To conclude, my own Government is determined to continue working with the Afghan Government and people, and our other partners in the international community, in support of a goal that, as we have all said and know, is in everybody's interests — a secure and stable Afghanistan whose Government, institutions and economy are on an irreversible path to long-term and sustainable development.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): I thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Fedotov, for their comprehensive and informative briefings. I would also like to express my respect and gratitude to all the men and women of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) who have demonstrated such deep commitment to this difficult mission. And I thank Ambassador Tanin for his statement.

We applaud the recent positive developments in the area of security in Afghanistan, such as the launch of the third tranche of transition, and we are pleased with the progress of the two initial rounds, which will bring 75 per cent of the country's population into the process. We are also pleased that the number of former anti-Government personnel enrolled in the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme has grown to 4,641, according to the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/462). Japan also welcomes the appointment of Mr. Salahuddin Rabbani as the new Chair of the High Peace Council.

Unfortunately, we have also witnessed several shocking incidents over the last quarter, such as the large-scale insurgent attack on 15 April, which affected several Government institutions and foreign missions, including the Japanese embassy, and the assassination of senior High Peace Council member Mawlawi Arsala Rahmani on 13 May. While such deplorable incidents show that grave security challenges remain, they have also been witness to the ability of the Afghan National Security Forces and have strengthened our resolve to stop the cycle of violence and ensure that such tragedies never occur again.

With that transition process and security situation in mind, our most predominant and demanding task is proving to the international community that Afghanistan will be stable and self-reliant in the future, particularly

beyond 2015. In order to achieve this, it is incumbent on both Afghanistan and its international partners to tackle the related challenges of advancing both security and sustainable development in the country. In that regard, we view this year's series of key high-level meetings, in particular the NATO Summit on security held in Chicago in May, the ministerial conference on regional cooperation held in Kabul in June, and the Tokyo conference on sustainable economic development, to be held in July, as momentous factors in the shaping of Afghanistan's future.

The NATO Summit in Chicago, together with the new strategic partnership agreement between Afghanistan and the United States, made important steps forward in terms of ensuring the constancy and predictability of the security situation in the country. Japan is also determined to continue its assistance to the Afghan National Police so as to improve it both qualitatively and quantitatively. Along with improving its security situation, it is essential for Afghanistan to work with its neighbours in order to achieve lasting stability and prosperity. Japan therefore supports the Istanbul process, launched in November, and recognizes the outcome of the Kabul ministerial conference held on 14 June.

Japan welcomes Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's attendance at the Tokyo conference as a sign of the consistent commitment of the United Nations to Afghanistan's stability and sustainable development. Building on the outcomes of the NATO Summit and the Kabul ministerial conference on regional cooperation, the Tokyo conference on Afghanistan on 8 July will focus on a sustainable development strategy for Afghanistan, and will discuss the coordination of international economic assistance, the Afghan Government's commitment to improving governance, and a follow-up mechanism. We will aim to reaffirm the historic partnership between the international community and the Government of Afghanistan, from transition to the transformation decade of 2015-2024, based on the concept of mutual accountability.

That notion of mutual accountability is at the very heart of our partnership. The Government seeks long-term assistance from the international community to enable it to become self-reliant in the future. In order to achieve such self-reliance, the Government must achieve a wide range of reforms in governance that will assure the international community that its assistance will be utilized in an appropriate and transparent way.

The necessary reforms are in a variety of fields; they include holding free and fair elections, combating corruption, establishing the rule of law and achieving better public financial management. In that regard, we would like to express our gratitude for the leading role that UNAMA has taken in this challenging area, as well as its efforts as a coordinator between the Afghan Government and international donors.

Japan has also actively supported the Government in these areas through its contributions to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations agencies' country programmes. Furthermore, we recently made the decision to contribute an additional $8.6 million to the second phase of the UNDP technical assistance project, Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, aimed at enhancing the functions of the Independent Election Commission regarding the presidential election of 2014, which will be critically important to the Government's legitimacy.

In the same spirit, Japan is ready to continue its assistance to Afghanistan in a responsible manner and encourages international partners to continue to deliver predictable financial support for the country. I would like to reiterate once again that the concept of mutual accountability is the key to the future prosperity of Afghanistan, based on a firm and lasting partnership with the international community.

With the drawdown of international troops bringing civilian agencies increasingly to the fore, UNAMA's leadership and coordination of efforts to achieve both sustainable peace and reconciliation and economic and social development in Afghanistan will only grow in importance. We would like to once again express our commitment to supporting UNAMA's efforts, and to pledge to work closely with the mission, the Government and other international partners for Afghanistan's lasting stability and development.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Mayr-Harting: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic

Area; as well as Ukraine and Armenia, align themselves with this statement.

Like others, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2012/462) and Under-Secretary-General Ladsous for his important briefing. I also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Ambassador Tanin for their statements.

It is important that the international community take a holistic view of its post-2014 engagement in Afghanistan, given the correlation between security and long-term development. The recent conferences held in Chicago and Kabul have been instrumental in that regard. They have refined and further developed the relationship between the international community and the Afghan Government. In the same vein, the upcoming Tokyo conference should focus on reviewing and renewing mutual commitments by the international community and the Afghan Government. I will briefly touch on the topics addressed at both conferences and then look ahead to Tokyo.

The NATO Summit in Chicago laid out plans for sustaining and developing the Afghan National Security Forces. At that Summit, the European Union stressed the importance of the Afghan National Police refocusing on civilian policing and on supporting the rule of law. Fair and impartial policing is essential if justice and human rights, especially those of women and children, are to be promoted. We therefore announce that the European Union is happy to increase its police funding by 20 per cent from the EU budget over the period 2011-2013, and also that the EU plans to make an enhanced contribution post-2014.

The recent ministerial conference in Kabul highlighted the important role that the countries of the region must play in supporting conflict resolution, better security and development in Afghanistan. We therefore welcome the agreement reached in Kabul on confidence-building measures to further regional cooperation.

Acknowledging that regional initiatives must be regionally owned and led, the EU stands ready to support such measures. The European Union has considerable experience and knowledge on how to advance regional cooperation.

The upcoming Tokyo conference will provide an excellent opportunity for the Afghan Government to set out its development strategy for the country. The European Union is ready to make an enhanced contribution to support for Afghanistan. However, that must be in the context of the Afghan Government fulfilling the commitments of the Kabul and Bonn conferences, as well as those in the mutual accountability framework, to be agreed in Tokyo.

Inter alia, that means, first of all, the peaceful transfer of power in 2014 as a result of inclusive, credible and transparent presidential and parliamentary elections. Secondly, further progress on the management of public finances — in particular the implementation of the International Monetary Fund recommendations — is required. Thirdly, domestic revenue collection needs to be increased through the development of more efficient, transparent and accountable customs and tax systems. Fourthly, guaranteed respect for human rights, in particular of women and children, including the support of an independent and active civil society, must be ensured. Fifthly, there must be reform of the justice sector to promote the rule of law.

Without tangible progress in those five areas, it will be difficult for donors to maintain their support to the Government of Afghanistan. Donors also need to make good on their commitments. The European Union will press for a better coordination of donor support and a better alignment between the Afghan Government and donors on priorities. We will also actively promote a better use of international mechanisms, all, of course, in close coordination with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Finally, it is essential that all resources made available be transparently and accountably managed. With regard to the latter, we are pleased to note that the United Nations Development Programme reacted promptly to the alleged accusations of mismanagement at the Law and Order Trust Fund by launching a full investigation. We await the conclusions of that investigation, the outcome of which will be important as regards our envisaged financial support for the Afghan National Police. Let me underline that that is an issue that we take very seriously.

In conclusion, the outcomes of the conferences will structure the international long-term engagement in Afghanistan beyond the end of the transition through the transformation decade, as agreed to in Bonn last year. As we move beyond transition, the United Nations has an essential role to play. UNAMA should

have the resources and the political support needed to assume that role. Its work will be of key importance in supporting the preparations for the upcoming elections, in monitoring the human rights and humanitarian situation, and in making such coordination bodies as the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board work more effectively.

The aim of our overall strategy in Afghanistan remains clear: to support Afghanistan on its path towards becoming a more peaceful, democratic and prosperous society.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous for his comprehensive briefing on the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2012/462). I would also like to thank the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Executive Director Yuri Fedotov for his briefing and Ambassador Tanin for his insightful statement.

Afghanistan has come a long way. We have seen with satisfaction the Afghan National Security Forces growing stronger to assume the security responsibility for almost 75 per cent of the population. The Afghan National Security Forces have improved in terms of capacity and professionalism. They have proved able to maintain security in those areas where they have assumed the lead. By mid-2013, they will be providing the lead for security across the country. That will mark the shift of the primary focus of the International Security Assistance Force from combat operations to training, advising and assisting. That clearly demonstrates that Afghanistan is on its way to sustainable self-reliance in the security sector. In Chicago, we gave the Afghan people the clear message of commitment that we would stand by them as they took the full lead for their security.

In our shared determination for a stable and secure Afghanistan, we have relentlessly supported the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process. We therefore welcome the appointment of Mr. Rabbani as Chair of the High Peace Council, and we strongly support his emphasis on a broad-based and inclusive peace process at the central and local levels. We are confident that, under his able leadership, the High Peace Council will successfully lead a comprehensive and genuinely inclusive peace process.

There are many dimensions of our cooperation in Afghanistan that we could discuss. Indeed, today, many speakers touched upon various issues. However, I would like to limit my intervention to the regional dimension of our joint endeavours.

Since last November, Afghanistan's immediate and more distant regional partners have embarked upon positive and constructive regional cooperation, with a view to ensuring a secure, prosperous and peaceful Afghanistan. Combined Afghan leadership and regional ownership are key drivers of the Istanbul process. We are indeed encouraged by our region's commitment to engaging in sincere and results-oriented cooperation for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan.

Two weeks ago, the Kabul ministerial conference on the Istanbul process was a clear testimony to our collective resolution in that regard. Our region is bound in its destiny. We will enjoy peace, security and prosperity only if Afghanistan, which plays a crucial role as the land bridge in the heart of Asia, enjoys peace and stability. As such, we believe that the positive energy mobilized through the Istanbul process will enhance existing efforts for a stable and prosperous region.

The Istanbul process has three main elements that we believe are important to emphasize. The first element is to enhance political dialogue among the region. Recognizing that regular political consultations at a high level is the most effective way of ensuring continuous dialogue, the Istanbul process participants committed themselves to meeting once a year for political consultations at the ministerial level. Such political momentum will be further enhanced through regular meetings of our senior officials, as well as our Kabul-based representatives.

The second element is to implement the confidence-building measures. Seven such measures, which are prioritized on common challenges such as disasters, terrorism, illicit drugs, impediments to trade and economic growth, and illiteracy, will be incrementally implemented by the participant countries. Within that framework, we are encouraged that a meeting will be held in New Delhi tomorrow to bring together regional and international investors in Afghanistan. That will be an opportunity for investors in all sectors to exchange views on Afghanistan's economic potential.

The third element is to build synergy among regional organizations. From the very beginning of the Istanbul process, we made clear our keen interest in developing greater coherence and in creating a better synergy with the existing regional cooperation processes pertaining to Afghanistan. In that respect, we are pleased that a significant number of those organizations were represented at the highest level in Kabul. We will continue to collaborate with them within that framework.

We would also like to commend the significant and constructive support and contribution that the United Nations has provided to the Istanbul process. Together, we have demonstrated our firm resolve for a successful future in Afghanistan.

Afghans have a clear vision for their future — a sovereign, secure and peaceful State that is economically self-sufficient. That vision is also very much related to Afghanistan's crucial role and regional and historical position in promoting connectivity and cooperation across its wider region. As Afghanistan's regional and international partners, we should continue to support Afghans in achieving their vision. To that end, Afghan ownership and leadership will be at the centre of our collective efforts.

Looking ahead, the upcoming Tokyo conference, which will be graciously hosted by Japan, will be an important opportunity for the Afghan Government to share its development strategy beyond the transition period. In Tokyo, the international community should reaffirm its continued support to Afghanistan's sustainable economic development.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge our strong support for the significant role played by the United Nations in Afghanistan. The United Nations should continue to be a strong partner for Afghanistan in the Afghan-led peace and transition processes. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Jan Kubiš and his team for their dedicated efforts.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): We thank Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and Ambassadors Tanin and Fedotov for their briefings.

Although we welcome recent developments in Afghanistan, which give room for cautious optimism, we remain mindful that it continues to face many serious challenges. For example, while there is an encouraging trend of fewer civilian casualties overall, we are particularly concerned by the increasing trend towards deliberately targeting civilians.

Like others, we applaud the outcomes of last month's NATO-International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Summit in Chicago, which highlighted the clear progress and reconfirmed the commitment of ISAF contributors to the transition strategy and to the future of Afghanistan. New Zealand continues to play its part. We will provide trainers to the Afghan National Army Officer Academy from 2013 and contribute financial support for the Afghan National Security Forces from 2015, targeted at rule-of-law initiatives in Bamyan province. We will also provide ongoing development assistance to Afghanistan, focused especially on Bamyan.

The work to train and sustain the Afghan National Security Forces is vital. We are pleased that we will be able to continue contributing to that endeavour after the end of the ISAF mission. In that regard, we especially support the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, as it highlights the importance of a distinct civilian role for the police. We welcome the Ministry of Interior's national police plan, prioritizing community-based policing, strengthening crime detection and prevention, safeguarding human rights and combating violence against women and children. Recent experiences in Bamyan suggest that this work will be vital to ensuring local populations develop the necessary trust and respect for their police force. We also take this opportunity to recognize the United Nations important work in advocating for accountability mechanisms within the Afghan security forces.

The forthcoming Tokyo conference will provide — as many others have noted — another opportunity for the international community to make different kinds of commitments to Afghanistan's long-term sustainability. Over the past decade, the international community has invested much in Afghanistan. We now hope that, at Tokyo, Afghanistan itself will be able to make its own commitments to ensuring that the international community can continue to invest in the country's future.

We are pleased that Bamyan is on track to complete transition later this year. There will nonetheless continue to be a role for the New Zealand provincial

reconstruction team in the months following the transition. That role will include the final stages of mentoring the provincial quick reaction force, securing the substantive completion of development projects, and supporting local authorities as they lead the province into its post-transition future.

The New Zealand provincial reconstruction teams will then complete its work in Bamyan and withdraw before the end of 2013, thus modeling the full life cycle of the transition process, while also fulfilling our commitment to the people of Bamyan. We are, however, keenly aware that the many serious challenges still facing Afghanistan must not be understated or underplayed. We therefore confirm our commitment to continuing to work with Afghanistan, its international partners and the United Nations in meeting these challenges together.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to Mr. Evans.

Mr. Evans: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to address the Security Council and to present a few remarks on the situation in Afghanistan and prospects for the future from the perspective of NATO.

The first point I wish to make is that the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is operating under Security Council authorization and to fulfil United Nations purposes. NATO's decisions in relation to ISAF are based on that fundamental principle. In NATO's quarterly reports to the Security Council, the latest of which was submitted by the NATO Secretary General on 31 May, we set out in detail the issues of interest to the Security Council. Our conclusions on the security situation are consistent with those of the United Nations. There has been a marked reduction in the number of security incidents in the first half of this year, compared to 2011, and the Afghan National Security Forces have made substantial progress in terms of numbers and quality. ISAF has integrated into its structures and operations the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, and taken measures on the protection of children from the damaging effects of armed conflict.

Last month, on 21 May, the NATO Summit in Chicago dedicated a full session to Afghanistan. It was attended by all 50 contributors to the ISAF mission, President Karzai, President Zardari and representatives of Russia, Central Asian States and Japan. The United Nations Secretary-General participated, as did the European Union. The presence of States involved in regional processes was a sign of their significance not only to the ISAF operation but also to the broader international effort to stabilize Afghanistan.

Allow me to sum up the key points of the Chicago summit. First, we assessed progress on the transition of security to Afghan responsibility. With the third tranche of transition starting now in Afghanistan, Afghan soldiers and police will be taking the lead for the security of 75 per cent of the population within the next few months. The Afghan National Security Forces are on schedule to take full responsibility for security by the end of 2014, and that is when we will complete our ISAF mission.

The Summit also looked beyond the end of the ISAF mission. At the international conference on Afghanistan in Bonn in December 2011, the international community recognized that Afghanistan would continue to need strong support and help after 2014. Against that background, at Chicago, NATO, along with our ISAF partners, confirmed that we will see our ISAF mission through and that we will then begin a new mission after 2014 to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces. The Afghan Government reaffirmed NATO's crucial role beyond 2014 and invited NATO to continue its support.

Finally, Chicago provided the opportunity for NATO allies and partners to confirm their broader support to Afghanistan and assistance to the Afghan National Security Forces after 2014. Chicago was not a pledging conference, but a number of allies and partners came forward with significant commitments of financial support both before and at the summit. Financing the Afghan national security forces is not a responsibility for NATO members and ISAF contributors alone. Nevertheless, Chicago added significant momentum to international efforts to secure the necessary financial support for the Afghan National Security Forces after the ISAF mission has ended.

The Afghan Government was closely consulted in the preparation of the Summit. President Karzai restated in Chicago the commitment of the Afghan authorities to face up to the challenges of good governance and promote human rights. As noted in the Chicago joint declaration issued with the Government of Afghanistan, continued progress on governance and human rights

would encourage ISAF contributors to further provide their support up to 2014 and beyond.

We have studied the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2012/462) and we note his concerns on civilian casualties. I have also taken note of Under-Secretary Ladsous's comments on that point today. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that 85 per cent of civilian casualties in 2012 have been caused by anti-Government elements. The reductions in the number attributable to ISAF and to the Afghan National Security Forces are well documented. We have seen a reduction of some 70 per cent from 1 February to 30 April 2012 compared with the same period in 2011.

As the NATO Secretary General has emphasized publicly, any civilian casualty is one too many. ISAF efforts to reduce civilian casualties are continuous and rigorous. We are also working very closely with the Afghan National Security Forces to strengthen their ability to prevent civilian casualties.

In conclusion, we have a clear strategy for completing the transition of full security responsibility to the Afghan National Security Forces by 31 December 2014. We are starting the process of planning our new mission to train, advise and assist those Afghan forces after 2014. More generally, NATO recognizes that its contribution to the stability of Afghanistan is just part of a much wider effort by the Afghans themselves, and by the international community, to tackle the broad spectrum of security, governance and development challenges faced by Afghanistan. In that context, much depends on the continued close cooperation between the United Nations and NATO, and specifically between the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and ISAF. It is only by working together in the spirit of the comprehensive approach that we can achieve in Afghanistan the aims which are set out clearly in Security Council resolutions and which meet the aspirations of the Afghan people.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Rivard (Canada): It has been a busy winter and spring for Afghanistan. Today's debate in the Security Council comes on the heels of a series of key high-level meetings over the past months that have included discussions on the future of the international community's engagement in Afghanistan beyond the end of the transition period. In Bonn, Camp David and Chicago, the Government of Afghanistan and the international community made significant progress in mobilizing continued support for Afghanistan and recognized the concept of mutual accountability. Canada is confident that the 8 July Tokyo conference will allow us to build on that progress, ensuring that Afghanistan undertakes the required reforms and has the support needed to successfully implement its development agenda for self-reliance, prosperity and stability during the remaining phases of the transition period and into the transformation decade.

Canada has been and will remain a committed partner in Afghanistan. As stated by Prime Minister Stephen Harper at the NATO Summit, Canada will continue its current training mission through to March 2014, with a view to ensuring that the Afghan National Security Forces are well trained and can assume full responsibility for their country's national security.

To help ensure a secure future for Afghanistan beyond 2014 and to build on the gains made thus far, the Prime Minister also announced in Chicago that Canada will provide $110 million per year over three years beginning in 2015 to help sustain the Afghan National Security Forces to provide security and stability in a sovereign and democratic Afghanistan.

As we prepare for Tokyo, Canada acknowledges the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan in the development of its "Supporting self-reliance in Afghanistan" strategy. The national strategic vision for the transformation decade focuses on the main development challenges in Afghanistan and, as such, provides both Afghan Government officials and donors a common framework for supporting an Afghan-owned development process. In developing that framework further, Canada recommends that greater emphasis be placed on essential services, such as health and education, and on the particular needs associated with the ongoing humanitarian challenges in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, we look forward to working with our partners to ensure that the Tokyo conference becomes a milestone in defining civilian support for Afghanistan beyond 2014. In doing so, a clear and credible mutual accountability framework will be required if the continued efforts of the Government of Afghanistan and the international community towards long-term stability in the country are to be successful and sustainable. Timely endorsement of well-sequenced national priority programmes ready for implementation with clear deliverables, concrete progress towards the

International Monetary Fund's programme benchmarks and increased capacity of the Afghan Government to absorb, manage and execute budget financing are pivotal in that regard.

Canada remains hopeful that the Government of Afghanistan's concerted efforts in defining its self-reliance strategy denote a strong commitment to addressing the Government issues that have seriously undermined development in the country. Reducing corruption, strengthening judicial institutions, increasing the meaningful participation of women and conducting elections that meet international standards all remain as key transition indicators. It is essential that the elections in 2014 and 2015 demonstrate improved integrity, inclusiveness and sustainability and lead to an orderly transfer of power that is viewed as legitimate by the wider Afghan public. To make that a reality, Afghanistan must undertake needed electoral reform on the basis of a broad consensus among political parties, civil society and other stakeholders.

The situation of Afghan women and girls also deserves our unwavering attention. Canada believes that the success of the transformation decade must be judged by the extent to which women contribute to security, stability and inclusive economic development in Afghanistan. In that regard, it is imperative that we build upon the principle established at this year's Group of Eight summit which recognized that political stability, democratic governance and economic growth cannot be sustained without according full and equal opportunities to both men and women and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom to practice religion. The advancement of women and girls in Afghanistan and the protection and promotion of their human rights remains a priority for Canada. Our ongoing civilian programming aimed at improving infant and maternal health, girls' education and women's literacy and women's increased access to and participation in Afghan justice and electoral systems reflect that priority. Canada will also continue to play a key role in coordinating with Governmental and civil society organizations, including women's organizations and networks, to promote greater coordination and strengthen advocacy for sustainable change.

As the third tranche of the security transition has recently been announced, we must remain vigilant as to the impact of the security transition on women and girls, and work to address the threat of sexual and gender-specific violence. In doing so, all parties must live up to our common commitment to take into consideration the different experiences of women and men in conflict and in fragile States, promote the meaningful participation of women in peace and security, and take special measures to protect women and girls in armed conflict, as outlined in resolution 1325 (2000).

(*spoke in French*)

The recent announcement by President Karzai of the third tranche of the transition is another indicator of the growing capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces to assume greater responsibility in terms of the security of their country. In recent months, the security forces have proved by their actions that their leadership and capacities are developing swiftly, in particular during the attacks by insurgents in Kabul on 15 and 16 April.

National political reconciliation remains central to lasting peace in Afghanistan. Canada remains hopeful that progress will be made in the peace process on the basis of broad societal reconciliation, transitional justice and respect for the Bonn principles.

Canada remains supportive of Afghan-led efforts to reach out to those who renounce violence, have no links with Al-Qaida or other terrorist organizations and respect the Afghan Constitution. Moreover, Afghan reconciliation cannot be considered in isolation from regional dynamics. In that respect, Canada is heartened by the progress made in recent months towards greater regional cooperation, notably through the Istanbul process.

At the Kabul ministerial conference held earlier this month, Canada welcomed the continued efforts of the Heart of Asia countries in moving forward with a regionally led process that features concrete, cooperative measures aimed at addressing common security and economic challenges. Canada stands ready to support the implementation of the process and its related confidence-building measures, including through our ongoing facilitation of the Afghanistan-Pakistan cooperation process.

In moving forward with its regional and international partners, Canada's ultimate goal remains to sustain the gains that have been made as a result of the sacrifices of Canadian, Afghan and international troops, and to help the Afghan people rebuild a viable society that is better

governed, more stable and more secure, and that will never again be a safe haven for terrorists.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

Ms. Freimane-Deksne (Latvia): Latvia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and would like to make a few remarks in its national capacity.

First of all, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/462), Mr. Ladsous and Mr. Fedotov for their briefings, and Special Representative Ján Kubiš and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) team for their professional and dedicated work. The efforts of the United Nations in coordinating and ensuring international support for Afghanistan in the years to come will be of particular importance.

Latvia reaffirms its long-term commitment to supporting Afghanistan in its efforts to undertake the remaining transition challenges entailing the assumption of leadership responsibility by the Afghan Government. Those challenges will continue to require a coordinated approach between the international community and the Afghan Government. Moreover, there should also be a coordinated approach among the various international players, whose efforts should be complementary. In that regard, the conferences in Bonn and Kabul, the Chicago Summit and the upcoming conference in Tokyo, as well as regional meetings at different levels, are of particular importance. In order to ensure greater United Nations coherence in Afghanistan, Latvia welcomes the first meeting, held in May, between the Afghan Government and all 27 United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and expresses its hope that this forum for ongoing dialogue will be maintained.

Latvia believes that efficient regional cooperation is an important factor in achieving the long-term political and economic stability of Afghanistan. Confidence-building between Afghanistan and all of its direct and more distant neighbours is necessary for the overall stability and development of the region and should be supported by the international community. In particular, we consider that the Central Asian countries have an important role in contributing to the stability and security of Afghanistan and the whole region, and that they should be closely involved in the efforts of the international community in that respect.

Transnational threats such as terrorism and drug trafficking endanger Afghanistan's security and the growth of a legitimate economy, as well as regional and international peace and security. Border security and drug-trafficking issues require the development of cooperation between neighbouring countries, and Latvia encourages the countries of the region to enhance cooperation in that regard. For its part, Latvia is providing a continuous financial contribution to the NATO-Russia project, implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), to train counter-narcotics personnel in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia. We also welcome the launch of the UNODC Afghanistan country programme for 2012-2014 in May of this year.

Latvia believes that it is important to look at the long-term economic perspective for Afghanistan, including enhancing its development as a transportation and transit hub in the region. In order to contribute to common efforts in that regard, Latvia hosted an international workshop this May, in Riga, on the possible transformation of the northern distribution network into a commercial transit route. The workshop was attended by more than 150 high-level Government officials, foreign-policy experts and representatives of transport and logistics companies from 30 countries, including from Central Asia. During the workshop, Latvia also pledged its support for training Afghan rail and civil aviation experts, an incentive that was welcomed by the delegation of Afghanistan.

That incentive supplements Latvia's continuous involvement in civil projects in Afghanistan, including those related to the promotion of the rights, participation and economic empowerment of women. Women play a vital role in the peace process, as recognized in resolution 1325 (2000), and they should also be involved in the development and implementation of post-conflict strategies, in order to ensure that their interests are taken into account.

Let me once again reiterate Latvia's commitment to remaining an active and reliable partner in the efforts of the international community towards a stable, secure and prosperous Afghanistan in a stable and prosperous region.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Khazaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): Since I am the last speaker and, as it is lunchtime, I will shorten my statement; the full statement will be circulated.

Let me start by expressing our gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Ladsous, as well as Mr. Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for their briefings today.

Afghanistan still faces some important challenges that could derail the country's stabilization and development, and harm regional and international security. Terrorism, violence, extremism and narcotic-drug production and trafficking are among the major threats that Afghanistan faces. But one important issue for the region and in the area of the relationship between Afghanistan and its neighbours is the presence of foreign forces in the country. that presence has provided a major security concern over the past decade for neighbouring countries and the region as a whole.

In analysing the situation on the ground, we believe that the long-term international engagement in Afghanistan should not lead to a long-term presence or permanent foreign military bases or a military and security presence in Afghanistan. The longer foreign forces are present, the longer disability will endure. Of course, the Afghan authorities have assured their neighbours that such a long- term presence will not be a security concern for its neighbours. Nevertheless, in our case, at least, we have experienced incidents such as the drone transgression into our airspace, and, obviously, security considerations are a matter that cannot compromised on.

Another area of ongoing concern is drug production and traffic. In his statement today, Mr. Fedotov noted that Afghanistan produces 90 per cent of the world's opiates. The narcotic drugs originating from Afghanistan affect not only neighboring countries but also other countries far away from the region. This menace has hindered the advancement of the affected countries towards development and has put at risk their social cohesion.

At the national level, the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken sweeping measures to counter drug trafficking. On the basis of that approach, the Islamic Republic of Iran has mobilized 30,000 military troops and law enforcement personnel along the joint borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan. We have also reinforced and re-managed the fortifications, facilities and intelligence control systems in transit and border checkpoints in order to prevent the entry of trafficking caravans into the country, and annihilate them in case of infiltration. More than 400 kilometres of embankments along the borders, 800 kilometres of deep canals, 90 kilometres of concrete walls, 20 kilometres of barriers and 140 kilometres of barbed wire fencing are just some of the control and security measures taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran along its eastern borders. That area was visited by Mr. Fedotov during his trip to Iran in July 2011.

In order for our fight against narcotic drugs to be effective, there is a need to review regional and international policies and programmes in order to overcome shortfalls and effectively counter them in dealing with such a global problem as narcotics. The Islamic Republic of Iran once more emphasizes its strong determination to combat this significant global problem and expresses its readiness to cooperate with others to decisively resolve such problems of global concern.

Regarding regional cooperation and the Tokyo conference, both of which we fully support, my full statement will be circulated among my colleagues.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): We have heard the last speaker for this meeting. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.